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FIFTY SERMONS ON HANDEL'S MESSIAH

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> Remember Handel? Who that was not born
> Deaf as the dead to harmony, forgets,
> Or can, the more than Homer of his age?

WHEN William Cowper introduced these verses into The Task in 1785 the gigantic Handel Commemoration of the preceding year still rang fresh in the ears of thousands of Englishmen. In 1783 several musical amateurs had proposed to commemorate the centenary of Handel's birth and the twenty-fifth anniversary of his death by a series of stupendous Handel performances on a hitherto unprecedented scale, and the first great Handel Festival had accordingly taken place in Westminster Abbey in the late spring of 1784, warmly patronized by George III and the greater nobility, and enthusiastically attended by more than three thousand persons from every corner of the kingdom. A vocal and instrumental band of 525 performers, "inflamed and actuated by the Muse of Handel," made this mammoth celebration "the most splendid tribute ever paid to posthumous fame," and current periodicals exhausted every superlative in praising the grand occasion. The European Magazine reported that "the immense volume and torrent of sound, was almost too much for the head or the sense to bear — we were elevated into a species of delirium." The performance was in "so superior, and so exalted a stile, that it must not be subjected to the rules of pettyfogging criticism," since "so grand and beautiful a spectacle, with at the same time a feast so rich and perfect, has not been presented to the public eye within our memory." [1]

[1] The European Magazine, May 1784 (Supplement).

During the course of five performances Handel's Messiah was heard in Westminster Abbey on May 26 and June 5. But as one turns the pages of contemporary records he observes that the ecclesiastical tone of this "venerable cathedral pile" scarcely redeemed the frank worldliness of a brilliant scene. To Dr. Charles Burney "the very filling the Abbey with such company, and the Orchestra with such performers, was a new, varied, and amusing spectacle." [2] Church officials attempted to control at least the physical appearance of the fashionable audience by announcing that only small hoops would be tolerated and that no ladies with hats (particularly hats with feathers) would be admitted. But the audience proved beyond clerical control. On the morning of the first performance persons of all ranks struggled violently to gain admittance to the building, and Burney wrote that "the female part of the expectants" screamed and fainted with apprehension of "fatal consequences" from being trampled upon by "the robust and impatient part of the croud." Inside the building soloists received storms of applause, while cheap theatrical effects rendered Handel's solemn strains noisy and bombastic, and the thunder of chorus and kettledrums for four hours proved almost deafening. Indeed it is not surprising that such an incongruous juxtaposition of sacred and secular elements aroused a cry of desecration from conservative churchmen and provoked fierce condemnation from poet and priest alike.

I

Strict devotees were scandalized at the sacrilege of commemorating a composer by singing his own works in the temple of the Lord, even though his works were dedicated to the glory of God, and even though the poor gained seven thousand pounds from the performance. To William Cowper the Handel Commemoration was nothing less than profanation of a sacred building. Although he entertained high respect for Handel's genius, Cowper was seriously alarmed at the growing prevalence of profane delights, and when he learned that a London clergyman actually

[2] Charles Burney, An Account of the Musical Performances in Westminster Abbey and the Pantheon . . . in Commemoration of Handel, London, 1785, p. 73 (second series of pagination).

gave concerts without words in his church on Sunday afternoons, he rose to angry eloquence in a discussion of sacred music:

The lawfulness of it, when used with moderation, and in its proper place, is unquestionable; but I believe that wine itself, though a man be guilty of habitual intoxication, does not more debauch and befool the natural understanding, than music, always music, music in season and out of season, weakens and destroys the spiritual discernment. If it is not used with an unfeigned reference to the worship of God, and with a design to assist the soul in the performance of it, which cannot be the case when it is the only occupation, it degenerates into a sensual delight, and becomes a most powerful advocate for the admission of other pleasures, grosser perhaps in a degree, but in their kind the same.[3]

With the Handel Festival Cowper was even more severe. That thousands of persons (all in danger of eternal punishment) should gather in a cathedral to honor a fellow-sinner by singing about their own future damnation, appeared to him the most incredible folly he could conceive. In a letter to William Unwin he enclosed a "short drama" which should "set the musical business in so clear a light that you will no longer doubt the propriety of the censure":

Scene opens, and discovers the Abbey filled with Hearers and Performers. An ANGEL *descends into the midst of them.*

Angel. What are you about?

Answer. Commemorating Handel.

Angel. What is a commemoration?

Answer. A ceremony instituted in honour of him whom we commemorate.

Angel. But you sing anthems?

Answer. Yes, because he composed them.

Angel. And Italian airs?

Answer. Yes, and for the same reason.

Angel. So then because Handel set anthems to music, you sing them in honour of Handel; and because he composed the music of Italian songs, you sing them in a church. Truly Handel is much obliged to you, but God is greatly dishonoured.

[*Exit* ANGEL, *and the music proceeds without further impediment.*[4]

[3] William Cowper, Correspondence (ed. Thomas Wright), London and New York, 1904, I, 352.

[4] Ibid., II, 270.

Cowper was not alone in his condemnation of the Abbey celebrations. His intimate friend also looked with puritanical suspicion upon every secular amusement. Early in June 1784 the Reverend John Newton expressed a desire to recall his countrymen to a sense of their true situation by preaching a course of fifty sermons on the words of Handel's Messiah, and Cowper warmly applauded his intention, although he confessed doubt as to results. On 21 June 1784 Cowper wrote to encourage his friend:

> We are much pleased with your designed improvement of the late preposterous celebrity, and have no doubt that, in good hands, the foolish occasion will turn to good account. A religious service, instituted in honour of a musician, and performed in the house of God, is a subject that calls loudly for the animadversion of an enlightened minister; and would be no mean one for a satirist, could a poet of that description be found spiritual enough to feel and resent the profanation. It is reasonable to suppose that in the next year's almanack we shall find the name of Handel among the red-lettered worthies, for it would surely puzzle the Pope to add any thing to his canonisation.[5]

For half a century serious Anglican divines had piously denounced all *playhouse* performances of Handel's Messiah as a species of profanation, while other clergymen with equal vehemence had opposed all *cathedral* performances of Handel's "sacred" oratorios as unspeakable sacrilege. To Newton's stern mind oratorios represented evil in a most insidious form, and he determined, like other Evangelicals, to oppose them with solemn denunciation. Newton never fully escaped the scriptural fetters of his age. With Cowper he held extreme Calvinistic views, although his evangelical fervor drew him close to the sentiments of Wesleyan Methodism. But the Wesleys (a highly gifted musical family) refused to leave all the best tunes to the Devil, whereas Newton considered every form of music (except simple hymn-singing) an exclusive prerogative of Satan.

Following an adventurous seafaring life as an African slave-trader Newton had experienced an extraordinary spiritual conversion and had been ordained curate of Olney in 1764. There

[5] Ibid., II, 213–214.

he became the sympathetic friend of William Cowper, and from their lifelong intimacy sprang the excellent Olney Hymns (1779), among which are some of the best known and most universally loved poems in the language. Those who know Cowper's "Oh! for a closer walk with God" and "There is a fountain filled with blood" and "God moves in a mysterious way" are no less familiar with Newton's "Amazing grace (how sweet the sound!)" and "Glorious things of thee are spoken" and "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds." Newton's hymns are remarkable for vigor, simplicity, and directness of devotional expression, and his fame today rests chiefly on them, although in his own day he was best known as an energetic preacher of force and eloquence. In 1780 he left Olney to become rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, Lombard Street, London, where he labored with unflagging zeal and widespread popularity until his death in 1807.

To the end of his life Newton exerted broad influence through his sermons and published works. His London congregation was always large. His scant preparation and extempore sermons were scarcely enhanced by his faulty utterance and uncouth gestures, but his unique personality and history, his bizarre illustrations, his vivid presentation of evangelical truths, his intense conviction of sin, and his simple address to men's temptations, perplexities, and troubles sent his words home. His knowledge of books, though extensive, was somewhat haphazard, and he was in no sense a profound thinker. A spirit of desolation and self-accusation pervades his work, but his style is easy, natural, and sincere, and certain passages evince deep fervor and tenderness. Newton's sermons possess small literary value. Of his first volume The Monthly Review remarked that "though we cannot agree with the Author in some of his notions, yet we are greatly pleased with that spirit of seriousness and piety which breathes through the whole of his discourses." [6] A later volume contained "plain, pious, practical discourses, with a due *seasoning* of orthodoxy." [7] One condescending reviewer declared that Newton "writes much in the strain of those Divines who are in so much request with the Methodists, &c. and to readers of that stamp, his book

[6] The Monthly Review, XXIII, 335 (October 1760).
[7] The Monthly Review, XXXVII, 316 (October 1767).

will, no doubt, be very acceptable and edifying, — provided he does not make it too voluminous and expensive." [8] In 1781 The Monthly Review found Newton's Cardiphonia "so beclouded by mysticism, so distorted by nonsense, that it seldom appears to any advantage." [9] Eight years later a series of "Thanksgiving Sermons" was stigmatized as "somewhat in the Tabernacle strain, — as might be expected by those who are conversant with Mr. Newton's writings." [10]

II

Of all Newton's sermons the most curious are those preached in 1784 and 1785 upon Handel's Messiah. Following the Handel Festival of 1784 Messiah aroused general enthusiasm, and it is evident that in adopting a popular theme Newton made use of current fashion to attract further attention to his sermons and books.

> Messiah, the great subject of the Oratorio, is the leading and principal subject of every sermon. His person, grace, and glory; his matchless love to sinners; his humiliation, sufferings, and death; his ability and willingness to save to the uttermost; his kingdom, and the present and future happiness of his willing people; are severally considered, according to the order suggested by the series of texts. Nearly connected with these topics are the doctrines of the fall and depravity of man, the agency of the Holy Spirit, and the nature and necessity of regeneration, and of that holiness, without which, no man shall see the Lord. On these subjects, the Author is not afraid of contradiction, from those who are taught of God.[11]

In his fifty sermons Newton endeavored "according to the measure of my ability and experience" to indicate "the meaning and importance of the well-chosen series of scriptural passages, which are set to music in the Oratorio of *the Messiah*." He believed that "The arrangement or series of these passages, is so judiciously disposed, so well connected, and so fully comprehends

[8] The Monthly Review, XLIII, 75 (July 1770).
[9] The Monthly Review, LXV, 201 (September 1781).
[10] The Monthly Review, LXXXI, 93 (July 1789).
[11] John Newton, Messiah: Fifty Expository Discourses, on the Series of Scriptural Passages, which form the Subject of the celebrated Oratorio of Handel, London, 1786, I, xv–xvi.

all the principal truths of the Gospel, that I should not attempt either to alter, or to enlarge it." [12] In his first sermon Newton explained the occasion for his discourses:

Conversation in almost every company, for some time past, has much turned upon the commemoration of Handel; the grand musical entertainments, and particularly his Oratorio of the *Messiah*, which have been repeatedly performed on that occasion in Westminster Abbey. If it could be reasonably hoped that the performers and the company assembled to hear the music, or the greater part, or even a considerable part of them, were capable of entering into the spirit of the subject, I will readily allow that the *Messiah*, executed in so masterly a manner, by persons whose hearts, as well as their voices and instruments, were tuned to the Redeemer's praise; accompanied with the grateful emotions of an audience duly affected with a sense of their obligations to his love; might afford one of the highest and noblest gratifications, of which we are capable in the present life. But they who love the Redeemer, and therefore delight to join in his praise, if they did not find it convenient, or think it expedient, to hear the *Messiah* at Westminster, may comfort themselves with the thought, that, in a little time, they shall be still more abundantly gratified. Ere long death shall rend the vail which hides eternal things from their view, and introduce them to that unceasing song and universal chorus, which are even now performing before the throne of God and the Lamb. Till then, I apprehend, that true Christians, without the assistance of either vocal or instrumental music, may find greater pleasure in a humble contemplation on the *words* of the *Messiah*, than they can derive from the utmost efforts of musical genius. This therefore is the plan I spoke of. I mean to lead your meditations to the language of the Oratorio, and to consider in their order, (if the Lord on whom our breath depends shall be pleased to afford life, ability and opportunity) the several sublime and interesting passages of Scripture which are the basis of that admired composition.[13]

Here Newton revealed no strong sense of impropriety in the Messiah performances at Westminster Abbey. Thus far he agreed that such performances were *capable* of inspiring "the highest and noblest gratifications" in "the performers and the company assembled." But he proceeded to more serious criticism in his sermon on "The Angel's Message and Song":

[12] Ibid., I, 5. [13] Ibid., I, 2–4.

The gratification of the *Great*, the *Wealthy*, and the *Gay*, was chiefly consulted in the late exhibitions in Westminster-Abbey. But notwithstanding the expence of the preparations, and the splendid appearance of the auditory, I may take it for granted, that the shepherds, who were honoured with the first information of the birth of MESSIAH, enjoyed at free cost, a much more sublime and delightful entertainment. How poor and trivial is the most studied magnificence and brilliancy of an earthly court, compared with that effulgence of glory which surrounded the shepherds? The performers of this Oratorio, if I may be allowed the expression, were a multitude of the heavenly host. And though I do not suppose that the angel delivered his message in the cadence, which we call *Recitative*, I have no doubt but the chorus was a *Song*, sweetly melodious as from blest voices. . . . We have reason to believe, there is, in the world of light and love, something analogous to what we call music, though different in kind, and vastly superior in effect, to any strains that can be produced by the most exquisite voices, or instruments, upon earth.[14]

Newton was convinced that "the sufferings of the Son of God, are, by no means, a proper subject for the amusement of a vacant hour." [15] He complained that at Westminster Abbey the scriptural message was reduced to the level of a worldly entertainment. In his fourth sermon he severely criticized "the spirit and temper of at least the greater part of the performers, and of the audiences" at the Handel Commemoration, and in his famous description of the Abbey celebration he provided material for all subsequent objectors to Messiah performances:

I represent to myself a number of persons of various characters, involved in one common charge of high treason. They are already in a state of confinement, but not yet brought to their trial. The facts, however, are so plain, and the evidence against them so strong and pointed, that there is not the least doubt of their guilt being fully proved, and that nothing but a pardon can preserve them from punishment. In this situation, it should seem their wisdom, to avail themselves of every expedient in their power for obtaining mercy. But they are entirely regardless of their danger, and wholly taken up with contriving methods of amusing themselves, that they may pass away the term of their imprisonment with as much chearfulness as possible. Among other re-

[14] Ibid., I, 182–183. [15] Ibid., I, 404.

sources, they call in the assistance of music. And amidst a great variety of subjects in this way, they are particularly pleased with one. They chuse to make the solemnities of their impending trial, the character of their judge, the methods of his procedure, and the awful sentence to which they are exposed, the ground-work of a musical entertainment. And, as if they were quite unconcerned in the event, their attention is chiefly fixed upon the skill of the composer, in adapting the style of his music, to the very solemn language and subject with which they are trifling. The king, however, out of his great clemency and compassion towards those who have no pity for themselves, prevents them with his goodness. Undesired by them, he sends them a gracious message. He assures them that he is unwilling they should suffer: he requires, yea, he entreats them to submit. . . . But instead of taking a single step towards a compliance with his goodness, they set his message likewise to music; and this, together with a description of their present state, and of the fearful doom awaiting them if they continue obstinate, is sung for their diversion, accompanied with the sound of cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of instruments. Surely, if such a case as I have supposed could be found in real life, though I might admire the musical taste of these people, I should commiserate their insensibility! [16]

Newton terminated this flat rhetoric by coldly censuring the holiday mood of Abbey audiences and emphasizing "the great impropriety of making the fundamental truths of christianity, the subject of a public amusement":

Mr. Handel . . . has been commemorated and praised, many years after his death, in a place professedly devoted to the praise and worship of God; yea, (if I am not mis-informed) the stated worship of God, in that place, was suspended for a considerable time, that it might be duly prepared for the commemoration of Mr. Handel. But, alas! how few are disposed to praise and commemorate MESSIAH himself! The same great truths, divested of the music, when delivered from the pulpit, are heard by many admirers of the oratorio with indifference, too often with contempt.[17]

In strengthening his argument *against* performances of Messiah Newton sometimes inadvertently provided excellent arguments in their favor. Apparently he failed to realize that one who refuses

[16] Ibid., I, 63–65.

[17] Ibid., I, 67–68.

to hear the "great truths" of scripture elsewhere (or one who hears them from the pulpit with "indifference" and "contempt") may hear them at a Messiah performance and find himself moved by Handel's elevating sublimities to consider the scriptural texts to which the music is set. After reading Newton's fourth sermon Cowper wrote to his friend in stern approval on 19 July 1784:

> Notwithstanding the justness of the comparison by which you illustrate the folly and wickedness of a congregation assembled to pay divine honours to the memory of Handel, I could not help laughing at the picture you have drawn of the musical convicts. The subject indeed is awful, and your manner of representing it is perfectly just; yet I laughed, and must have laughed had I been one of your hearers. But the ridicule lies in the preposterous conduct which you reprove, and not in your reproof of it. A people so musically mad as to make not only their future trial the subject of a concert, but even the message of mercy from their King, and the only one he will ever send them, must excuse me if I am merry when there is more cause to be sad; for melancholy as their condition is, their behaviour under it is too ludicrous not to be felt as such, and would conquer even a more settled gravity than mine.[18]

In subsequent sermons Newton proceeded to chastise connoisseurs who attended Messiah performances for musical gratification rather than for spiritual edification. In speaking of "those who *crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame*," Newton condemned "persons who can bear to hear of his passion and his kingdom, when made the subject of a musical entertainment, but upon no other occasion." [19]

> To see, by the eye of faith, the glory of the Redeemer in his appearance; to see Power divine preparing the way before him; to enter into the gracious and wonderful design of his salvation; to acknowledge, admire and adore him as the Lord, and humbly to claim him as *our* God, must afford a pleasure, very different from that which the most excellent music, however well adapted to the words, can possibly give. The latter may be relished by a worldly mind; the former is appropriate, and can only be enjoyed by those who are taught of God.[20]

[18] Cowper, Correspondence, II, 229.
[19] Newton, Messiah, I, 206.
[20] Ibid., I, 28–29.

Newton expressed his fear that "many persons, who have received pleasure from the music of the *Messiah*, have neither found, nor expected, nor desired to find, any comfort from the words." [21] Many, he believed, "were only captivated by the music, and paid no more regard to the words than if they had no meaning." [22] Of the chorus "For unto us a Child is born" he spoke highly:

A person who would be thought destitute of taste, if he was unaffected by the music to which this passage is set, would, at the same time, hazard his reputation for good sense, with some judges, if he owned himself affected by the plain meaning of the words. Incompetent judges surely! who are pleased to approve of warmth and emotion of spirit, provided the object be trivial, and only condemn it in concerns of the greatest importance! [23]

Frequently Newton repeated his central conviction that "the great truths of God" were not enhanced by Handel's music but rather buried beneath its impressive grandeur. "If you heard the *Messiah*, you were, perhaps, affected by the music," he said in a characteristic passage; "how much are you to be pitied, if you are hitherto unaffected by the sentiment!" [24] To Newton the words of Messiah were of far greater consequence than Handel's most stunning music:

The music of the *Messiah* is but an ornament of the words, which have a very weighty sense. This sense no music can explain, and when rightly understood, will have such an effect as no music can produce. That the music of the *Messiah* has a great effect in its own kind, I can easily believe. . . . I can allow, that they who heard the *Messiah*, might be greatly impressed during the performance; but when it was ended, I suppose they would retain the very same dispositions they had before it began. And many, I fear, were no more affected by this sublime declaration of the Lord's design to shake the heavens and the earth, than they would have been, if the same music had been set to the words of a common ballad.[25]

Even the grand "Hallelujah Chorus" was powerless until the hearer absorbed "an abiding sense of the importance of the sentiment it contains":

[21] Ibid., I, 23.
[22] Ibid., I, 44.
[23] Ibid., I, 166.
[24] Ibid., I, 123.
[25] Ibid., I, 47–48.

The impression, which the performance of this passage in the Oratorio, usually makes upon the audience, is well known. But however great the power of music may be, . . . it cannot soften and change the hard heart, it cannot bend the obdurate will of man. If all the people who successively hear *the Messiah*, who are struck and astonished, for the moment, by this chorus in particular, were to bring away with them an abiding sense of the importance of the sentiment it contains, the nation would soon wear a new face. But do the professed lovers of sacred music in this enlightened age, generally live, as if they really believed that *the Lord God omnipotent reigneth?* Rather, do not the greater part of them live, as they might do, if they were sure of the contrary? . . . It is impossible . . . to make this song our own, and cordially to rejoice that *the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*, unless we are the willing subjects of his government. . . .[26]

Actually Newton nursed no bitterness towards Handel's "sublime" music. He commended the "great propriety" of the "Hallelujah Chorus" and praised "I know that my Redeemer liveth" as "a beautiful and well chosen introduction to the third part of the *Messiah*." But in his sermons Newton displayed only a slight acquaintance with Handel's masterpiece. From his frequent use of such phrases as "I have heard" and "I have been informed" it is clear that he knew almost nothing of "the celebrated oratorio" upon which he preached fifty sermons! "I have been informed," he declared in a typical quotation, "that the music to which this passage is set, is so well adapted to the idea that it expresses, as, in a manner, to startle those who hear it."[27] In his praise of "Since by man came death" Newton again revealed a strange unfamiliarity with details of Handel's music:

From Mr. Handel's acknowledged abilities as a composer, and particularly, from what I have heard of his great taste and success, in adapting the style of his music to the subject, I judge, that this passage afforded him a fair occasion of displaying his genius and powers. Two ideas, vastly important in themselves, are here represented in the strongest light, by being placed in contrast to each other. Surely the most solemn, the most pathetic strains must be employed, if they accord with the awful words, *By man came death, in Adam all die.*[28]

[26] Ibid., II, 175–176, 187.
[27] Ibid., II, 170.
[28] Ibid., II, 265–266.

In his last sermon Newton summarized his criticism of the Handel Commemoration and recapitulated the central theme of his fifty discourses:

It is probable, that those of my hearers, who admire this Oratorio, and are often present when it is performed, may think me harsh and singular in my opinion, that of all our musical compositions this is the most improper for a public entertainment. But while it continues to be equally acceptable, whether performed in a church or in the theatre, and while the greater part of the performers and of the audience, are the same at both places, I can rate it no higher, than as one of the many fashionable amusements, which mark the character of this age of dissipation. Though the subject be serious and solemn, in the highest sense, yea, for that very reason, and though the music is, in a striking manner, adapted to the subject, yet, if the far greater part of the people who frequent the Oratorio, are evidently unaffected by the Redeemer's love, and uninfluenced by his commands, I am afraid, it is no better, than a profanation of the name and truths of God, a crucifying the Son of God afresh. You must judge for yourselves. If you think differently from me, you will act accordingly. — Yet, permit me to hope and to pray, that the next time you hear *the Messiah*, God may bring something that you have heard in the course of these sermons, nearly connected with the peace and welfare of your souls, effectually to your remembrance.[29]

With this forceful peroration Newton brought his sermons to a close. In the spring of 1785 he delivered his last discourse and promptly made arrangements for private publication. Cowper had followed the series with deep interest, and when Newton asked his help in securing an appropriate motto, he promised to search his library:

I shall not leave my books unransacked; but there is something so new and peculiar in the occasion that suggested your subject, that I question whether, in all the classics, can be found a sentence suited to it. Our sins and follies, in this country, assume a shape that Heathen writers had never any opportunity to notice. They deified the dead, indeed, but not in the Temple of Jupiter. The new-made god had an altar of his own; and they conducted the ceremony without sacrilege or confusion.[30]

[29] Ibid., II, 459–460.
[30] Cowper, Correspondence, II, 336–337.

Cowper declared himself "happy to serve" his friend with whatever "may occur susceptible of accommodation to your purpose," and he expressed his belief that the Bible "will abundantly supply you with applicable passages. All passages, indeed, that animadvert upon the profanation of God's house and worship, seem to present themselves upon the occasion." [31]

Newton's Messiah was first published in two enormous octavo volumes early in 1786, and The Universal Magazine advertised it as available in May. Critical reaction was mixed. The Monthly Review observed that Newton's sermons "contain much real piety, and may be read with profit by all, and, probably, with peculiar pleasure by those who are of the party." But the same reviewer proceeded to answer Newton's censures with a defense of the Abbey Commemoration:

> Mr. N[ewton] objects much to the music in the Abbey, . . . and says, "They set God's message to music." Had this message been delivered in a few and solemn words, it might have been improper to have set such words to music, as it undoubtedly is, to set some awful passages of Scripture. But this is not the case. It is the poetical passages of the Prophets, and Psalms, and the hymns in the Revelations that are set to music. We know the Psalms of David, however different their subjects, were set to music, by himself or his *chief musician*, and we rather suppose the message delivered by the angel — "On earth peace, good will towards men," was *sung* by the heavenly choir. However this be, the objections here brought are general; and hold against all anthems and choir-singing whatever. The antipathy of the modern Puritans both to the arts and sciences, exactly resembles that of their ancestors. Organs and cathedral singing were their abomination: and our Author reprobates the Abbey music, and thinks the study of mathematics and philosophy at Cambridge "serves only to sharpen our natural proneness to vain reasoning." [32]

One reviewer stigmatized Newton's opinions as "cant," and Cowper rose to Newton's defense in "The Critics Chastised," a short poem written on a page of The Monthly Review:

[31] Ibid., II, 338. For his motto to Messiah Newton finally chose a verse from the Old Testament: "Oh that they were wise, that they understood this!" (Deuteronomy 32:29).

[32] The Monthly Review, LXXVII, 211–213 (September 1787).

These critics, who to faith no quarter grant,
But call it mere hypocrisy and cant
To make a just acknowledgment of praise,
And thanks to God for governing our ways,
Approve Confucius more, and Zoroaster,
Than Christ's own servant, or that servant's Master.[33]

Newton was much ridiculed for conducting a crusade against Handel's Messiah. Certainly he failed to reflect the popular verdict in his objections to that "sacred oratorio." But his complaints were in strict accord with the tone and spirit of the Evangelical Revival, and when one overlooks a few narrow and uncharitable passages, the sermons still answer a wholesome purpose in emphasizing the solemn words of an oratorio now admired chiefly for its music.

III

In condemning the Handel celebrations Cowper was not content merely to encourage his friend in the progress of his sermons on Messiah. Cowper's own convictions were strong. Deeply affected by the evangelical religious movements of his day, he rejected the cold impersonality of early eighteenth-century deism and sought comfort in the more subjective and emotional experiences offered by the new evangelical sects. Methodism emphasized man's *personal* relation with God through every stage of religious experience, and Wesley's enormous popularity lay in his attempt to introduce "the life of God in the souls of men," to substitute for sternly Calvinistic predestination a gracious message of hope, and to translate personal piety into brotherhood and social duty. Of the many hymn-writers of eighteenth-century England Cowper was the most gifted and distinguished, and his finely-wrought Olney Hymns express the hope of this new evangelicalism. But the ecstatic poet of the religious revival was by nature introspective, and his constant heart-searching (inspired by fears lest God's grace be withdrawn) proved too much for his already melancholy tendency to self-distrust. Under the

[33] The Unpublished and Uncollected Poems of William Cowper (ed. Thomas Wright) London, 1900, pp. 61–62.

pietistic life inspired by Newton's strict tutelage at Olney Cowper was seized in 1773 with a conviction that God's displeasure rested heavily upon his soul. He never lost this persuasion that he was irretrievably damned, and his religious despair thereafter appeared in the gentle melancholy and morbid religiosity of much of his verse.

His masterpiece is The Task (1785), which reflects deep interest in nature, in animals, in country life, in humble people, and in social reform. Cowper's purpose was "to combat that predilection in favour of a metropolis, that beggars and exhausts the country," and "to have a stroke at vice, vanity, and folly, wherever I find them." [34] In his six books of Miltonic blank verse Cowper found space to range from tender portraits of lowly life to spiritual autobiography suggesting Wordsworth's Prelude. His final book is entitled "The Winter Walk at Noon," and here Cowper deplored the faults of urban civilization and lashed the British aristocracy for its moral deficiencies. Speaking of the late Handel Festival, Cowper directed his sharpest lines at the "Commemoration-mad" who participated in "a deed less impious than absurd":

> Man praises man. Desert in arts or arms
> Wins public honour; and ten thousand sit
> Patiently present at a sacred song,
> Commemoration-mad; content to hear
> (O wonderful effect of music's power!)
> Messiah's eulogy for Handel's sake.
> But less, methinks, than sacrilege might serve —
> (For was it less? what heathen would have dared
> To strip Jove's statue of his oaken wreath,
> And hang it up in honour of a man?)
> Much less might serve, when all that we design
> Is but to gratify an itching ear,
> And give the day to a musician's praise.
> Remember Handel? Who that was not born
> Deaf as the dead to harmony, forgets,
> Or can, the more than Homer of his age?
> Yes — we remember him; and while we praise

[34] Cowper, Correspondence, II, 272–273.

A talent so divine, remember too
That His most holy book from whom it came
Was never meant, was never used before,
To buckram out the memory of a man.

This bitter passage is somewhat incoherent and more than a trifle hasty and headlong. Intensely pious himself, Cowper was offended that a recognized masterpiece of "sacred" music, based upon purely scriptural texts and composed by a genius whom he revered, should be performed in a solemn cathedral where (according to the Prayer Book) the entire service is to be chanted or sung to organ accompaniment. Apparently Cowper could not comprehend that a sensitive hearer finds Messiah a magnificent hymn, an act of devotion, a religious experience. Eventually he dismissed the matter as too foolish to deserve serious consideration:

But hush! — the Muse perhaps is too severe,
And, with a gravity beyond the size
And measures of the offence, rebukes a deed
Less impious than absurd, and owing more
To want of judgment than to wrong design.[35]

Cowper's remarks contain no criticism of Handel himself; he even implies that "the more than Homer of his age" is too celebrated a genius to require formal commemoration. And in reproaching Festival audiences for self-indulgent pursuit of mere pleasure Cowper was, of course, partially justified.

IV

But one writer failed to agree that Cowper's "ill-natured" reproach and "corrosive fires" found justification in the grand Handel Commemoration. To Anna Seward, "The Swan of Lichfield," Cowper was a "vapourish egotist" whose "generally red and angry beams" were by no means "auspicious to human happiness, or to human virtue." "Shield me from saints who look upon the world as a den of fools and knaves!" she exclaimed early in 1786; "I repine when such possess a muse of fire." [36] To Miss Seward

[35] The Task, VI, 632–657.
[36] Anna Seward, Letters, Edinburgh, 1811, I, 112–113.

The Task revealed "many and great poetic beauties, both as to imagery, landscape, and sentiment; yet the author perpetually shows himself to be a sarcastic misanthropist." [37] "O! that such a master of the metaphoric, the allusive, the scenic, and the pathetic graces, should so often lay them aside to whip the follies of the age with an iron-rod, sometimes mistaking good for evil propensities, as when he satirizes the amiable warmth of encomium upon the talents it reveres!" [38] Deploring Cowper's "ungenerous sentiments" and the "harsh asperity" of his "satiric scourge," Miss Seward granted that "But for the illiberal protest of this author against the generosity of encomium, against the gratitude of tributary praise, I should have read his poetry with pleasure unallayed, as I confess it was exquisite." [39] She regretted that Cowper's "dazzling irradiations of fancy" and "many noble sentiments" failed to redeem his "severe moral satire," which appeared to her "on some occasions, most ungenerous and unjust." [40]

In her attempt to explain "the uncharitable acrimony, and envious grudging of well-earned praise, which lour so dark, and so livid, through his poem," Anna Seward refused to accept Cowper's "constitutional melancholy in excuse for his misanthropy." "If it is possible," she wrote, "that melancholy can so narrow the mind, as to render a man of genius, like the Cowper, the avowed satirical foe of national gratitude, and of honour to the manes of such beings as Shakespeare and Handel, it then becomes a vice, against which every generous reader will bear the most renouncing testimony." [41] Finding "his judgment perverted by jealous prejudice against the compositions of contemporary genius," [42] Miss Seward suspected a possible explanation for Cowper's "narrow and bigoted satire on human praise" in her belief that he was not free from "all unworthy jealousy of rival reputation." [43] She based her suspicion of Cowper's jealousy on the fact that "He confesses his earnest desire of public praise, yet satirizes, in the Task, its administration to others, even to the memory of Shakespeare and Handel." [44]

[37] Ibid., I, 121.
[38] Ibid., I, 128–129.
[39] Ibid., I, 255.
[40] Ibid., V, 320.
[41] Ibid., I, 296–297.
[42] Ibid., VI, 159.
[43] Ibid., VI, 165.
[44] Ibid., VI, 63.

But Miss Seward found a more probable explanation in "the narrow and miserable principles of Calvinism, with which he was so deeply tinctured." [45] To her mind Cowper seemed "a bitter satirist" who made "religion the implement of his spleen": [46]

> Fanatics have almost always cold hearts. Mr Cowper, whose poetic talents have such glowing and creative powers, professes himself, in the Task, a contemner of all praise, which has not Deity for its exclusive object. The plain meaning of what he says on the subject is just this; — "You fools, with your jubilee for your Shakespeare, and your commemoration for your Handel! What is it to you, that one was the first poet, the other the first musician in the world? What is it to you, if one employed his talents in promoting the moral virtues, and the other in exciting the spirit of devotion? Neither of them can get you a better place in Heaven. Away, then, with your idle disinterested encomiums and honours. Praise only HIM who can permanently reward your praises." These are the maxims of those cold-hearted devotionists, whose religion is composed of selfishness and terror. I cannot think that the oblations of such mere parasites in religion can be acceptable as those of the benevolent man, whose piety is the result of blended gratitude to his Maker, and of kindling esteem and love for whatever is great and worthy in man; who praises such efforts, without coldly pausing to consider, whether he shall get any thing by his encomiums, here or hereafter.
>
> Since all the powers of the human mind in science and art, as well as in religion and morality, are the gift of God, to applaud and to commemorate their industrious cultivation, cannot be displeasing to their great Giver. Shall he not lend a gracious observance of such liberal and unenvying testimony of fraternal love from one created being to another? Mr Cowper bends an eagle glance upon the follies and vices of his contemporaries, and an owlish one upon their talents and virtues.[47]

In The Task Miss Seward "perceived the dark seeds of fanaticism sown, and feared they would, in time, produce bitter fruits, deadly to the peace of his heart." But in 1785 Cowper's narrow sentiments "had only choked his generosity respecting the noble enthusiasm of just applause; they had not then shed their envenomed dews on his bosom-tranquillity." [48] Anna Seward once heard John Newton preach "a violently methodistical, and conse-

[45] Ibid., VI, 60.
[46] Ibid., VI, 166.
[47] Ibid., I, 183–184.
[48] Ibid., V, 327–328.

quently absurd and dangerous sermon," and thereafter she attributed Cowper's fanaticism to Newton's rigorous piety: "The result to poor Cowper of making Newton his comfortless conscience-keeper, ought to warn people of strong imagination how they listen to religious fanatics, presumptuously calling themselves evangelical preachers." [49]

Three years after The Task was first published Anna Seward expressed her reactions in a blank verse "Remonstrance addressed to William Cowper, Esq. in 1788, on the sarcasms levelled at national gratitude in The Task." [50] Because of "the reported depression on his spirits" Miss Seward graciously refused either to send the lines to Cowper or to publish them during his lifetime. She commenced her verses by quoting nearly two lines from the poem she attacked:

> "I would not enter on my list of friends,
> Tho' grac'd with polish'd manners," tho' endow'd
> With talents destin'd to immortal fame,
> But wanting generosity, the man
> Who darts the blighting of satiric wit,
> Lanc'd from a spleenful heart, or sullen weaves
> The dark anathemas of Calvin's school
> Against a nation's praise, its grateful praise,
> Pour'd for the assiduous culture of those gifts
> Bestow'd by Heaven, — not on the general mind,
> But on the chosen Few, ordain'd to prove
> In what full portion to the human soul
> God can impart intelligence; the rays
> Destin'd to stream from their eternal source
> Through future ages . . .
> . . . O! wintry Spirit,
> Hurling thine icy bolt of sarcasm
> Against the loveliest and most generous rites
> That e'er an honest, grateful nation paid
> At the bright shrine of Genius! Look'st thou back
> With grudging eyes on those applausive hours
> When Poesy and Music, with twin'd arms,
> Attended jubilant? [51]

[49] Ibid., VI, 65–66.

[50] Anna Seward, Poetical Works (ed. Sir Walter Scott), Edinburgh, 1810, III, 5–14.

[51] Ibid., III, 5–7.

In 1765 David Garrick had inaugurated the Stratford Jubilee to commemorate the bicentenary of Shakespeare's birth. Cowper naturally associated this grand tribute to Shakespeare with the Handel Commemoration nineteen years later, and in The Task the "Misanthropist" showered upon both celebrations the same "invidious ridicule":

> Lo! in a strain
> Fanatic and illiberal as the lay
> Maligning Avon's festival, thou scorn'st
> Thy country, marshalling in holy shrines
> The harmonic strength of Europe, to fulfil
> The great designs Briarean Handel plann'd;
> That mighty, matchless German, who attun'd
> His lyre seraphic to thy native tongue! —
> Thou heard'st with grudging and disgusted ear
> Those great designs attain'd, when, thro' the aisles
> Of the vast ancient fane, in torrents burst
> Those floods of harmony, that lift the soul
> Upon their swelling and tumultuous waves
> Up to the Throne of God. — O! what is Virtue,
> If praise of those, who thus their talents ten
> Ardent improv'd, is folly, or is vice? [52]

In a note to this passage Sir Walter Scott remarked that the charitable purpose of the Abbev performances "places the injustice of Cowper's sarcasm upon a level with its absurdity, accusing them, as it does, of a profane and idolatrous tendency." [53] A longer note expanded Scott's comment and summarized Anna Seward's opinion of Cowper's masterpiece:

The delineation of Cowper's character, and the records of his life, compared with the illiberal censures which disgrace the interesting and beautiful passages of the Task, teach us, more than ever, to deplore the dire Calvinistic principles, which ruined his peace, and which could so freeze and narrow a heart, which Nature had made warm and expansive. They taught him to anathematize for departed genius, sublimer and more extensive than his own, Shakespear[e] and Handel, that praise for the magnificent talents they had cultivated, which his

[52] Ibid., III, 8–9.
[53] Ibid., III, 9 (note).

published letters prove him to have been desirous to obtain for his own poetry.[54]

V

Newton's fifty sermons on Handel's Messiah and Cowper's strictures on Handel Festivals were not soon forgotten. Long after both men lay in their graves pious ladies and reverend clergymen mused upon those curious offshoots of eighteenth-century English evangelicalism. Although Victorians performed Handel's Messiah in every chapel and cathedral in the kingdom, Newton's fervid sermons nevertheless served a useful purpose in reminding nineteenth-century audiences of the intrinsic spiritual values within Handel's masterpiece. In 1812 appeared a quaint volume entitled A Series of Reflections on the Sacred Oratorio of the Messiah, "by a Lady," in which the author "ingenuously" confessed that her work was "chiefly compiled from a larger work on the same subject" by John Newton. "Care has been observed, however, to avoid any peculiarities respecting certain controverted points of doctrine; and the liberty has been also used of altering any expressions that occurred, so as to adapt them to the purpose in view." [55] One reviewer observed that "Whoever has compared the two, will acknowledge that the spirit of the original is, not only, ably compressed, but that the words of the oratorio of the *Messiah* are well illustrated, and ably adapted to popular comprehension, in a way that could not, in a work of much larger extent, be equally inviting to the mass of persons frequenting the performance." [56] This popular work received official sanction from The Lord Bishop of Durham and reached its seventh edition in 1836.

Most detailed of all replies to Newton's Messiah was Dean Edward B. Ramsay's thoroughgoing response in his Two Lectures on the Genius of Handel, delivered in January 1862. In his discussion of the "distinctive character" of Handel's "sacred com-

[54] Ibid., III, 14 (note).

[55] A Series of Reflections on the Sacred Oratorio of the Messiah, by a Lady, London, 1812, p. vii. Of this rare work a copy of the fifth edition (1831) is available in the Lowell Mason Collection of the Yale University Library. The Sterling Memorial Library of Yale University possesses microfilms of the first (1812) and seventh (1836) editions.

[56] The Christian Remembrancer, XIII, 153–156 (March 1831).

positions," Ramsey regretted that "well meaning, conscientious persons have felt it their duty to protest against oratorios, forbidding their families to attend on such performances as they would forbid their attendance on scenes of mere earthly gaiety, on the opera, and on theatrical entertainments." Ramsay found it difficult to impute sincerity to such "unadvised and party traditionary assertions." [57] He maintained that "Handel's music is oftentimes of a salutary nature," that "it is capable of elevating the thoughts," and that "it adds a charm and interest to the sublime passages of Scripture." [58] "Is music only to be associated with religion so long as it is homely, or of the simplest construction? Is it to be put down when it soars into the region of the true sublime, and draws its inspiration from the very sublimity of Holy Scripture?" [59] Ramsay pointed out that when anyone already familiar with Handel's Messiah reads or hears such scriptural passages as "For unto us a Child is born" and "He was despised and rejected of men," he usually associates the Biblical texts with Handel's music. "They seem indissoluble," Ramsay declared, "and I suppose I should so connect them were I hearing them on the bed of death." [60]

Ramsay's reply to Newton's fourth sermon on "The Lord Coming to His Temple" contains his chief defense of Handel's Messiah:

> Now, so far as setting the great truths of our religion to music and singing them, it is what is done by every congregation in the kingdom. What is the singing such hymns as that by Watts, "When I survey the wondrous cross," but setting to music the great truths of our most holy faith? According to Newton's supposition, they set these things to music *instead* of considering them in their heart. But who knows the heart so as to be enabled to say this? At any rate, there is no intention of making the music put away the ideas; on the contrary, they are set to music *because* the ideas are admitted to be solemn, grand, and important. Congregations sing religious statements in *order* to impress them more forcibly on the minds of the worshippers. . . .

[57] Dean [Edward B.] Ramsay, Two Lectures on the Genius of Handel, Edinburgh and London, 1862, p. 66.
[58] Ibid., p. 72.
[59] Ibid., p. 79.
[60] Ibid., p. 72.

Taking the careless and the unimpressed by religious truths generally, we may ask whether their danger and the mercy of their pardon are most likely to be forgotten by their never thinking about either one or the other, or by having music composed for them, and by hearing it performed. . . . Surely it is better that the attention be attracted than that there should be no attention paid at all.[61]

To those who complained that persons possessing "no affinity with religious feelings" attend oratorios "merely as a place of public amusement," Ramsay suggested that fools who come to scoff sometimes remain to pray. "But letting that pass, we would ask whether a performance is *in itself* objectionable, simply because some persons are found to flock to it under mixed motives, or from mere selfish motives." [62] Later Ramsay wondered "why some persons attending oratorios merely for gratification of musical taste should prevent all *others* attending them who do so upon higher motives." [63]

Ramsay regretted that "frequently the character and feelings of great public performers, by whom the music is executed, do not correspond to the nature of the performance, and that it is done as a mere matter of professional skill, and with no religious intentions." But again he insisted that one cannot "abandon the performance itself because liable to this objection." [64] Should one encourage wretched village choirs to sing their Maker's praise and yet deny the finest voices in the land? Should not the best of everything be offered to the Lord? Did not David and Solomon gather the choicest singers of Israel for the service of the Temple?

Can it be supposed possible that God would confer upon any of his creatures powers capable of such magnificent and sublime effects, and that these powers, when exercised upon his own word, are to be put down as injurious, nay, or profane? . . . I cannot see how defects in the workmen are to affect the work done. Is the art itself to be condemned because you disapprove the artist? [65]

Thus Ramsay expressed his conviction that Handel's Messiah, founded on the life of Christ and based on scriptural texts, could

[61] Ibid., pp. 70–71.
[62] Ibid., pp. 74–75.
[63] Ibid., p. 80.
[64] Ibid., pp. 75–76.
[65] Ibid., pp. 79–80.

be performed nowhere else so fitly as in a solemn cathedral. He doubted the piety of those who felt no devotion on hearing Messiah within *any* building, but he believed that Messiah realized its highest expression only within the ancient and consecrated walls of Westminster Abbey:

I can hardly believe that those good persons who object to attendance upon the performance of oratorios are in reality quite sincere, or that they have deeply and seriously considered the subject in all its bearings upon the religious sensibilities of our nature. The appreciation of the great works of Handel, and other great masters, is spreading throughout the land, and now extends from the highest to the lowest in the social scale. The Handel commemorations have become identified with national feelings. Surely it were better to direct such a movement, and give it the full religious character of which it is capable, than make the vain attempt of putting it down as evil.[66]

[66] Ibid., pp. 88–89.

A LATIN HYMN TO THE CREATOR ASCRIBED TO PLATO

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A hymn to the Creator ascribed to Plato deserves attention, even if both form and content show clearly that it is of much later date. Such a poem is preserved in the Anthologia Latina,[1] where it is introduced as a translation from Greek made by "a certain Tiberianus." [2] This interesting document, in thirty-two verses, may be translated as follows: [3]

* Died July 22, 1945, in Jerusalem. The article has been prepared for publication by Dr. Francis R. Walton.

[1] Anthologia Latina, I, 2, no. 490, p. 46 f., ed. A. Riese. The poem was first edited by M. Haupt in 1838, then by L. Quicherat in 1842, afterwards by E. Baehrens (Poet. Lat. Min. III 267 f.), and by Riese. Riese lists five MSS, and gives the readings of the two oldest: Regensis 215, saec. IX (=R) and Parisinus 2772, saec. X–XI (=P). See Baehrens, op. cit. 263 f., M. Schanz, Geschichte der römischen Literatur IV, 1², § 791, p. 45 f., F. Lenz in PWK, s.v. Tiberianus, 772.

[2] The heading of R runs: versus Platonis de deo (with no mention of the translator). P reads: versus Platonis a quodam Tiberiano de greco in latinum translati (likewise codex Vindobonensis 143, saec. XIII, from which Haupt edited the text). Riese combines the two headings and prints: Tiberiani versus Platonis de Graeco in Latinum translati.

[3] The poem is given here after Riese's text, but with a shortened apparatus criticus. Purely orthographical variants, slips, and a few far-fetched alterations proposed by G. Hermann and E. Baehrens are omitted. The justification of the present text follows in the course of the investigation.

Omnipotens, annosa poli quem suscipit aetas,
Quem sub millenis semper virtutibus unum
Nec numero quisquam poterit pensare nec aevo,
Nunc esto affatus, si quo te nomine dignum est,
Quo, sacer, ignoto gaudes, quod maxima tellus
Intremit et sistunt rapidos vaga sidera cursus.
Tu solus, tu multus item, tu primus et idem
Postremus mediusque simul mundique superstes.
Nam sine fine tui labentia tempora finis,
Altus ab aeterno spectans fera turbine certo
Rerum fata rapi vitasque involvier aevo
Atque iterum reduces supera in convexa referri,
Scilicet ut mundo redeat, quod partibus (h)austum
Perdiderit, refluumque iterum per corpora fiat.
Tu (siquidem fas est in temet tendere sensum
Et speciem temptare sacram, qua sidera cingis
Immensus longamque simul complecteris aethram
Fulmineis forsan rapida sub imagine membris)

"Almighty, borne by age-old heavens, amid Thy myriad virtues Thou art ever One, and no one can measure Thee with number or with time. Now (if by any name it is meet to invoke Thee) Thou shalt be invoked by the unknown name in which Thou, the Holy One, dost rejoice, whereat the mighty earth trembles, and the wandering stars stand in their swift course. Thou art One and likewise Many, Thou art First and Last, Thou art at once the Center and the Survivor of the universe. For Thou art without end, yet Thou bringest an end to the swift passage of time, and on high, from eternity, Thou dost behold harsh fate swept on with immutable whirl, Thou dost behold lives enclosed in time and again led back and returned to the upper spheres — so that the vitality, exhausted by births,[4] which the universe has lost may return to it and may again circulate through the (celestial) bodies. If indeed we may turn our mind to Thee to assay Thy holy form — wherewith Thou, the Immeasurable, dost gird the stars and dost embrace all at once the vast ether, with limbs, perchance, swift as the flash of lightning — Thou art as it were a fiery radiance, by whose blaze Thou dost see all and dost rule our sun and day. Thou art the whole race of gods, Thou the

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Flammifluum quoddam iubar es, quo cuncta coruscans
Ipse vides nostrumque premis solemque diemque.
Tu genus omne deum, tu rerum causa vigorque,
Tu natura omnis, deus innumerabilis unus,
Tu sexu plenus toto, tibi nascitur olim
Hic deus, hic mundus, domus hic hominumque deumque,
Lucens, augusto stellatus flore iuventae.
Quem (precor, aspires), qua sit ratione creatus,
Quo genitus factusve modo, da nosse volenti.
Da, pater, augustas ut possim noscere causas,
Mundanas olim moles quo foedere rerum
Sustuleris animamque levi quo maximus olim
Texueris numero, quo congrege dissimilique,
Quidque id sit vegetum, quod per cita corpora vivit.

1 suspicit R, rec. Riese 5 quod maxima PR, def. Norden, Agnostos Theos 78, n. 1, 176, n. 1, quo corr. Quicherat 9 finis RP, frustra temptat Riese 10 spectans RP, spectas corr. Riese 13 (h)austum] corr. Quicherat///austrum R, abstrum P, aethra coni. G. Hermann, aevum coni. Riese 14 corpora P, tempora R, rec. Riese 18 fulmencis P, fulmineus R, em. Riese 19 coruscas P, coruscant R, em. Riese 21 dei R 24 domus hic PR, haec coni. Riese 25 iuventus PR, iubente Par. 17160, s. XII, iuventae em. Quicherat, prob. Riese 30 maximus R, maximi P 32 est PR, sit em. Baehrens.

[4] See below, n. 16. If, however, we derive *partibus* from *pars*, the passage may be translated: "so that what has been consumed and lost in the separate parts may return to the universe etc." (F.R.W.)

cause and strength of all things, Thou art all nature, one god innumerable, in Thee are both male and female, to Thee was once born this god, this universe, the home of both men and gods, gleaming and sparkling with the sublime flower of youth. Breathe Thy favor on my prayer, and grant me to know how this universe was created, how born or made. Grant, O Father, that I may know the sublime causes, by what bond Thou hast sustained the cosmic mass, with what insubstantial numbers, even and odd, Thou hast, in Thy greatness, woven the Soul, and what vigorous force lives in the Swift Bodies."

The poem is modelled on the fixed scheme of ancient religious hymnology.[5] After a short description of the Supreme God's abode and immeasurability (v. 1–3) the poet announces his decision to invoke the Omnipotent by His "unknown name" (v. 4–6), turns to the praise of His eternal power and regenerating force (v. 7–14), adds a characterization of His "holy form" (v. 15–20), and resumes the description of His nature with special emphasis on His cosmogonical faculty (v. 21–25). This last subject leads naturally to the statement of the special purpose which prompted the prayer, the desire to obtain the explanation[6] of four cosmogonical problems: how the world was created; how Matter was bound together; of what numbers the Cosmic Soul was compounded; and what vital force animates the stars (v. 26–32).

The four problems identify the petitioner. All of them are main topics of Plato's Timaeus. The clearest reference to this work is contained in the third question, concerning the "like or unlike numbers" with which the Soul was "woven." Accord-

[5] F. Klingner, De Boethii consolatione philosophiae (Philol. Unters. XXVII, 1921) 51, n. 5 distinguishes three parts in Tiberianus' hymn: v. 1–6 *ἐπίκλησις*, v. 7–25 *ἀρεταλογία*, v. 26–32 *εὐχαί*. On such hymns see E. Norden, Agnostos Theos 155, n. 1.

[6] V. 28 *noscere causas* is taken from Virg. Georg. II 490 *rerum cognoscere causas*. Klingner, op. cit. 51 f. (refuting R. Peiper, Boetii philos. cons. ed. Lipsiae 1871, praef. p. lvii) correctly explains the similarity of this line of Tiberianus' poem with Mart. Capella II 193, v. 30 f. *da, pater, aetherios mentem conscendere coetus, astrigerumque . . . noscere caelum*, and with Boeth. Phil. cons. III, 9, v. 22, *da, pater, augustam menti conscendere sedem*, by the common use of hymnic formulae. It may be observed that Tiberianus prays for answers to specific questions, whereas both Martianus Capella and Boethius pray for a mental ascent to the vision of the deity.

ing to the Timaeus, at least as later interpreted, the demiurge fashioned the Cosmic Soul by a combination of odd and even numbers.[7] The second question, regarding the "bond" by which the Creator "sustains" (i.e. keeps from falling) the cosmic mass, alludes to the chain of proportion which in the Timaeus unites the four elements.[8] In the same work the celestial bodies are declared to be animate beings,[9] and this accounts for the last question, on the vital forces enlivening the stars. Cosmogony, the subject of the first question, is the theme of the whole first part of Timaeus' speech.

Thus, the contention of the heading, that the hymn was spoken by Plato, is supported by the nature of the questions. The author of the poem suggests the fiction that the philosopher attained his metaphysical insight by means of a revelation vouchsafed to him by the Highest God whom he invoked for this very purpose. It is true that in the Platonic dialogue Timaeus prefaces his discourse with a prayer to "the gods and goddesses" to favor his bold undertaking.[10] Presumably, our hymn is conceived as a poetical equivalent of that prayer.[11]

[7] Plat. Tim. 35 A f. Compare the Latin paraphrase of this passage in Macrob. in somn. Scip. I 6, 2: *Timaeus Platonis fabricatorem mundanae animae deum partes eius ex pari et impari* (Tiber. v. 31, *congrege dissimilique*) *id est duplari et triplari numero intertexuisse* (Tiber. v. 31, *texueris*) *memoravit.* Cf. ibid. I 6, 46; II 2, 1; 14; 19f. Macrobius' source was Porphyry; see Mras, Macrobius' kommentar zu Ciceros Somnium Scipionis, Sitzungsber. Berlin, 1933, 244 f. For *texueris* see also Plut. De anim. procreat. 25, 1025 B and epit. 6, 1032 F: τὸ πᾶν συνύφηνεν ἓν τῆς ψυχῆς εἶδος. (Cf. also Plat. Tim. 41 D, where in the creation of man, the Creator provides the immortal part and the created gods work the mortal part into the texture (προσυφαίνοντες). F.R.W.)

[8] Plat. Tim. 31 C calls the proportion which connects the four elements δεσμὸν συναγωγόν. Tiber. translates this notion by *foedus*, perhaps with reference to Lucretius' *foedus naturae* (I 586 and often) or Manil. I 252 and III 55: *aeterno religatus foedere mundus.* For *mundanas moles* see Macrob. in somn. Scip. I 6, 24: *deus mundanae molis artifex . . . insolubili inter se vinculo elementa devinxit, sicut in Timaeo Platonis adsertum est*; Manil. II 62 (reproducing the analogous Stoic doctrine): *ingentem aequali moderantem foedere molem*; Boeth. Cons. phil. III 9, v. 10f.: *Tu numeris elementa ligas . . . ne . . . mersas deducant pondera terras* (cf. Tiber. v. 30: *sustuleris*, which could, however, come from *tollo*, "raise," instead of *suffero*).

[9] Plat. Tim. 38 E, 39 E f. For *cita corpora* see Plat. Crat. 397 D, who explains θεοί as τὰ θέοντα, "the running," with reference to the planets (often called σώματα by Plato).

[10] Tim. 27 C.

[11] *Tu genus omne deum* (v. 21) and *deus innumerabilis unus* (v. 22) indicate that to the author of the hymn the Omnipotent is identical with the "gods and goddesses" of the prayer of Timaeus. See also n. 43 below.

In the arguments expressed in the hymn itself there are many evidences of the author's acquaintance with Platonic doctrines.[12] The Supreme Being is described (v. 10–14) as the ruler of eternity who, observing [13] the whirl of fate, sees life enter the realm of temporality, return therefrom to the "upper spheres," [14] and stream back again into the cosmic bodies [15] in order to replenish the universe with the vital forces "exhausted by births." [16] This theory of the circulation of life which renews itself by returning to its superterrestrial starting-place is likewise based on a famous passage of the Timaeus, where the growth and decay of life are described in mythical fashion.[17] When the demiurge had created the heavenly bodies, he called together the "created gods" to give to them the task of making mortal beings and of supervising their existence. "Produce living beings," he says, "bring them forth, nourish and increase them, and when they die receive them again." Proclus, in his commentary on the Timaeus, interprets this as the law of eternal rebirth (*παλιγγενεσία*): "Plato's words 'receive them again at death' mean the renewal of Becoming and the return of Dissolution into Becoming. For nothing vanishes entirely, inasmuch as the gods who are set over Becoming . . . receive back when it perishes what they bring to birth . . . and unceasingly bring full the cycle of Becoming and Dissolution . . . They add to the whole what they take from the whole." [18]

[12] As will be shown later, the author drew not only from the original teaching of Plato, but also from that of later representatives of the school.

[13] *Altus ab aeterno spectans*, v. 10; cf. Boeth. Cons. phil. V 2, p. 124, 26f. Peiper: *ille ab aeterno cuncta prospiciens providentiae cernit intuitus*. See n. 28 below.

[14] *Supera convexa* is taken from Virg. Aen. VI 241; see E. Norden, Virgilius Aeneis Buch VI², p. 202.

[15] The correct reading *corpora* (v. 14) is kept by cod. P.

[16] The MSS read, v. 13–14: *ut mundo redeat, quod partibus austrum* (*abstrum* is a vulgar "betacismus") *perdiderit*. An (*h*)*austrum* is a scoop attached to a water-wheel, see Nonius 13, and Lucret. V 516. We expect, however, not a noun, but a perf. pass. part., agreeing with *quod* and governing the abl. *partibus*; this is most simply provided by Quicherat's emendation (*h*)*austum*; cf. Nonius 319, *haurire significat exaurire*; Serv. Aen. V 396, *'effetae' exhaustae, et est translatio a mulieribus, quas frequens partus debiles reddit*; Seneca, Contr. II 5, 6, *nullis hausta puerperiis fuit* (*femina*). Accordingly, we should follow Baehrens and derive *partibus* from *partus*, not *pars*; the heteroclitic form offers no difficulty.

[17] Tim. 41 A f. Cf. also 33 C, 49 C.

[18] Proclus, Comm. in Plat. Tim. III, p. 241, 7–11, 30–31; p. 242, 2–4; and cf. p. 310, 15f., p. 318, 13f. See also Plut. De Iside 59, 375 B; 63, 376 D; Celsus ap. Orig. c. Cels. IV 59–60, 69; Hippolyt. Ref. I 19, 5 (Diels, Doxographi 567,

The "created gods" who, according to the Platonic Timaeus, are invested with the supervision of this everlasting process were identified by later Platonists with the planetary rulers.[19] Hence in the hymn it is stated that life returns from the terrestrial domain to the "upper spheres." The account in the Timaeus also explains why the author of the hymn did not introduce the demiurge himself as the dispenser of life, but only as looking from afar at the process: he had delivered this task to his ministering gods and had decided to remain aloof from all interference with mortal affairs.[20]

According to the hymn, the circulation of life is connected in some way with the "ending of time." [21] A well-known passage in Plato's Politicus makes this clearer.[22] There the philosopher expounds the theory of alternating world-periods: an "age" is finished when the souls have completed their appointed births and returned to their celestial starting-place. At the end of a period, when "the whole terrestrial race is consumed," the cosmos changes its state and a new age begins. It is apparently this doctrine that is alluded to in the line of the hymn: "Thou art without end, yet Thou bringest an end to the swift passage of time" (v. 9).

Also Platonic is the description of the "holy form" of the Supreme Being. He is compared with a "fiery radiance" which, enclosing the ethereal zone wherein the planets move, illuminates the universe and rules over "sun and day" (v. 15–20). The basic idea of this description is borrowed from the doctrine of later

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22f.); Sallustius, De deis XVII p. 30, 2of.; p. 32, 21f. Nock; Synesius, Hymn III 325f.; Chalcidius in Plat. Tim. XXIV. For the wording cf. Seneca, Quaest. nat. III 10, 3 (giving the Stoic theory on the alteration of the elements): *quidquid alteri perit in alterum transit.*

[19] Chalcidius in Plat. Tim. CXXXVIII; Julian. Orat. IV 140 A. See Zeller, Philosoph. d. Griech. II 1^5, p. 813, n. 3, 814, n. 3.

[20] Tim. 42 D–E. The emphasis laid on the *fera fata* (v. 10–11) suggests that the author had in mind the Middle Platonic differentiation between Providence and Fate, Providence being the general world-plan as fore-thought by the Creator, and Fate its realization in time and space; cf. e.g. Boeth. Phil. cons. IV 6, p. 109, 45 f. Peiper, especially p. 110, 77: *ea (fati) series . . . nascentia occidentiaque omnia per similes fetuum seminumque renovat progressus.* For the Middle Platonic origin of this doctrine see Klingner, op. cit. 88f., E. R. Dodds, Proclus, The Elements of Theology, 271, n. 1, and cf. Chalcidius in Plat. Tim. CXLI f.

[21] *Spectans* (v. 10) must be kept, as v. 10–14 describe the ending of the world cycle mentioned in v. 9.

[22] Plat. Pol. 272 D f.

Platonists who localized the supreme deity in the outermost sphere of the universe consisting of pure "noetic" fire, by whose light the stars and the world were illumined.[23] Since this dwelling place is above the heavens, the Supreme Being is said in the hymn to be "borne" by them.[24]

Several other traits in the description of the Omnipotent are likewise Platonic, such as the designation as Father and as begetter of the world, which calls to mind the "Maker and Father of the universe" of the Timaeus.[25] Further, the cautious approach to a description of the highest god in physical terms[26] (v. 15–16 siquidem fas est . . . speciem temptare sacram; v. 18 forsan) suggests Platonic influence, for the godhead is to Plato an intellectual being, and can be perceived only by the mind.[27] So much for the Platonic elements of the hymn.[28]

Quite a different kind of literature formed the model for the invocation. The relevant passage is as follows: "Now (if by any name it is meet to invoke Thee) Thou shalt be invoked by the unknown name in which Thou, the Holy One, dost rejoice, whereat the mighty earth trembles, and the wandering stars stand in their swift course." Norden has already observed that this invocation agrees almost word for word with a widespread magical

[23] Cf. Plat. Rep. 540 A. In v. 20, *solemque diemque*, for *dies* = *solis splendor* see Thes. ling. Lat., s.v. *dies* I A 2 a.

[24] *Suscipit* (v. 1): the heavens bear the Omnipotent like a burden (the reading *suspicit* makes no sense). The view is derived from Plat. Phaedr. 247 C; cf. Apuleius, Apol. 64; id. De Platone I 11, p. 95, 9 Thomas: *ultramundanus* (*deus*); Albinus 181, 36 Hermann; *ὑπερουρανίῳ*.

[25] Tim. 28 C: *τὸν μὲν οὖν ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντός*.

[26] The comparison of the vision of God to a lightning flash occurs in Plut. De Iside 77, quoted in n. 57 below. Cf. also Plat. Epist. VII 341 C and Symp. 210 E.

[27] Cf. Plat. Rep. 532 A–B; Albinus 165, 4: *τῷ νῷ μόνῳ λητπός*. Boeth. Cons. phil. III 9, v. 23–24 says correctly: *da luce reperta in te conspicuos* animi *defigere visus*.

[28] V. 2, *sub millenis semper virtutibus unum*: cf. Maximus of Madaura ap. Augustin. Epist. 16, Migne, P.L. XXXIII 82: *unum esse deum summum . . . huius nos virtutes per mundanum opus diffusas multis vocabulis invocamus, quoniam nomen eius cuncti proprium videlicet ignoramus.* Maximus reproduces a Middle Platonic doctrine; see Beyerhaus, Rhein. Mus. 1926, 36f.; A. D. Nock, Rev. Ét. Anc. 1928, 287, n. 2. For other parallels see Cumont, Religions Orientales[4] 300, n. 22.

V. 3, *nec numero quisquam poterit pensare nec aevo*: cf. Albinus 164, 28, *ἀΐδιος*; Apuleius, De Platone I 5, p. 86, 13 Thomas, *ἀπερίμετρος*; Maxim. Tyr. XI 9 C, 11 E. It may be noted that in the hymn *aevum* signifies 'time,' and *aeternum* 'eternity.'

formula.[29] Two examples from the rich stock of parallels preserved in the magical papyri will illustrate this. "Hearken to me, O Lord, Thou of the secret ineffable name, at the sound of which demons tremble . . . the earth shakes . . . and rivers, seas, lakes, and fountains congeal." "I shall call upon . . . the greatest name among the gods . . . the earth shall quake, the sun stand still, and the moon be frightened." [30] Magical notions also account for the hymnodist's assertion that the Omnipotent rejoices to hear His ineffable name. The ultimate source of this belief is ancient Greek hymnology, and several hymns emphasize that the divinity is pleased by an invocation with his proper name.[31] The reverse is sometimes true for the prayers of magicians who fear the wrath of the evoked gods or demons and try to propitiate them by sacrifices and promises.[32] More "enlightened" magicians, however, priding themselves on their relations with their tutelary god, adopted the theme of divine pleasure in being properly invoked, and inserted it in their hymns of conjuration; [33] texts of this kind were in all probability the model for the author of our hymn.

The combination of Platonic and magical elements appears clearly at this point. The later Platonists applied the epithet ἄρρητος to the highest god to mark the impossibility — because of the inherent limitations of human conception and speech — of adequately describing the divine perfection.[34] The parenthesis

[29] Norden, Agnostos Theos, 78, n. 1.

[30] Preisendanz, Pap. Mag. Gr. XII 239 (quoted by Norden, loc. cit.): *ἐπάκουσόν μου, κύριε, οὗ ἐστιν τὸ κρυπτὸν ὄνομα, ἄρρητον, ὃ οἱ δαίμονες ἀκούσαντες πτοοῦνται . . . οὗ (τὸ ὄνομα) ἡ γῆ ἀκούουσα ἐλίσσεται . . . ποταμοὶ, θάλασσα, λίμναι, πηγαὶ ἀκούουσαι πήγνυνται*; XIII 871: *ἐπικαλοῦμαί σου τὸ ὄνομα, τὸ μέγιστον ἐν θεοῖς. ὃ ἐὰν εἴπω τέλειον, ἔσται σεισμός, ὁ ἥλιος στήσεται, καὶ ἡ σελήνη ἔνφοβος ἔσται.* Cf. also Lucan, Phars. VI 744 f.: *Paretis? an ille Conpellandus erit, quo numquam terra vocato Non concussa tremit?* Annotatio super Lucanum ad loc.: *Deus maior, quem magi noscunt.* For these and other parallels see T. Hopfner, Griech-Aegypt. Offenbarungszauber II § 153.

[31] See H. Usener, Götternamen, 336, n. 11.

[32] On the wrath of the evoked demons, see Hopfner, op. cit. I § 239.

[33] Cf. Porphyry, De philos. ex orac., quoted by Euseb. Praep. evang. V 8, 4, v. 4–5 (Wolff, 156): *πειθοῖ τ' ἀρρήτων ἐπέων, οἷς δὴ φρένα τέρπειν | ἀθανάτων ἐδάη θνητὸς βροτός*; Pap. Mag. Gr. IV 1609: *ἐπικαλοῦμαί σου τὰ ἱερὰ καὶ μεγάλα καὶ κρυπτὰ ὀνόματα, οἷς χαίρεις ἀκούων*; ibid. VII 690: *ἐπικαλοῦμαί σε τοῖς ἁγίοις σου ὀνόμασι, οἷς χαίρει σοῦ ἡ θειότης*; Orph. Lithica 725 f. Abel: *τόφρα δὲ κικλήσκειν μακάρων ἄρρητον ἑκάστων | οὔνομα. τέρπονται γάρ, ἐπεί κέ τις ἐν τελετῇσιν | μυστικὸν ἀείδῃσιν ἐπώνυμον οὐρανιώνων.* See Hopfner, op. cit. I § 688.

[34] *Ἄρρητος*: Albinus 164, 28; Apuleius, De Plat. I 5, p. 86, 16; De deo Socr. 3, p. 9, 13f.; Apologia 64; Celsus ap. Orig. VII 42; Maxim. Tyr. II 10 A, XI 9 C–D;

in v. 4 of the Latin hymn, "if by any name it is meet to invoke Thee," alludes to this view. Yet in what follows the author affirms that the Omnipotent rejoices in his "unknown name." This "unknown name" is, however, not a metaphysical but a magical notion.[35] As the papyri show, the *ἄρρητον ὄνομα* consisted of a jumble of vowels and consonants, and the recitation of these so-called *voces mysticae* was frequently preceded by the declamation of a hymn (*ὕμνος κλητικός*) composed in hexameters.[36] It may be therefore that the hymn to the Omnipotent ascribed to Plato pretended to be such a prayer preceding a magical invocation.

The portrayal of Plato as a magician who elicits by magical devices the secrets of the Omnipotent's power, so that he may later publish them in his Timaeus, is certainly the most curious metamorphosis which the legendary portrait of the philosopher underwent in antiquity. The source of this strange idea may appear from an inquiry into a third influence discernible in the hymn, Orphism.

Orphic influence appears most clearly in the following lines: "Thou art One and likewise Many, Thou art First and Last, Thou art at once the Center and Survivor[37] of the universe" (v. 7–8); "Thou art the whole race of gods, Thou the cause and strength of all things, Thou art all nature,[38] one god innumerable, in Thee are both male and female, to Thee was once born this god, this universe,[39] the home of both men and gods,[40] gleaming and sparkling with the sublime flower of youth" (v. 21–25).[41]

Clem. Alex. Strom. V 10 (65, 2), 12 (81, 5); Plotin. V 3, 13. See Dodds, op. cit. 310–313.

[35] On the *ἄρρητον ὄνομα* of the magicians see Hopfner, op. cit. I § 681 f.

[36] Cf. e.g. Pap. Mag. Gr. II 81 f., IV 930 f., 1955 f., 2714 f., V 400 f., VII 668 f.

[37] *Superstes* is an addition by the author of the hymn, and alludes to the Platonic doctrine of the world-ages. See note 22.

[38] *Tu natura omnis*, v. 22: *φύσις* is identified with the Supreme God of the Orphics in Hymn Orph. X v. 10, 18. These hymns show the Stoicizing tendency common to many products of later Orphism.

[39] The deification of the universe is, however, not an Orphic but a Platonic doctrine. Cf. Tim. 34 B, 40 A, 92 C.

[40] V. 24 recalls the Stoic formula, *mundus communis deorum atque hominum domus*, cf. Fragm. St. Vet. II 1131; Diels Doxographi 464, 20. Cf. also, however, Orph. Frag. no. 169, 7–8 (Kern): *ἐν ὄμμασι πατρὸς ἄνακτος | ναίουσ' ἀθάνατοί τε θεοὶ θνητοί τε ἄνθρωποι.* The third *hic* in v. 24 must be kept, as all three pronouns refer to *mundus*.

[41] *Flore iuventae*: cf. Virg. Aen. VII 162, VIII 160.

Kern, the editor of the Orphicorum Fragmenta, rightly observed that these verses are closely dependent on the great Orphic Hymn to Zeus, the chief document of Orphic poetry.[42] Certain characteristics of the deity are the same in both: his bisexuality, his identity with the pantheon,[43] and his procreation of the world; and the solemn formula, "Thou art first, last, and middle," is an almost literal borrowing from the Orphic hymn.[44]

There are in addition other, less obvious features common both to the Latin hymn and to Orphic hymnography. As we have seen, the Latin hymn was supposed to be an invocation addressed by Plato to the Creator in order to get answers to certain cosmological questions. The closest parallel to this is found in the prologue of the Orphic Ἱερὸς Λόγος, a long-winded epos in twenty-four songs composed about the beginning of our era, and regarded by the Neoplatonists as the authoritative presentation of Orphic wisdom. The prologue to this work opens with a hymn of Orpheus to Apollo, and concludes with his prayer to learn about "the birth of the gods, the making of the universe, and who made it"; Apollo thereupon appeared and revealed the secrets of creation, which Orpheus wrote down in the succeeding rhapsodies.[45] It is probable that this prologue served as a literary model to the author of our hymn.

Also from Orphic sources may have been borrowed the idea of magical incantation. As is well known, Orpheus was regarded as the originator not only of theology, but also of magic. Mysticism and magic run close together in Orphic tradition, and the use of hymns for magical purposes is known from later Orphic literature. The Greek Fathers quote an Orphic ὕμνος κλητικός to the Ruler of the Universe which was transmitted to them in various forms.[46] One variant concludes with the following invocation:

[42] Orph. Fragm. no. 168, p. 207 Kern. See Wilamowitz, Glaube d. Hellenen II 199, n. 1.

[43] See Norden, Agnostos Theos, 229, n. 1. Cf. also Orph. Fragm. no. 248, 5, μητροπάτωρ. With *deus innumerabilis unus* (v. 22) cf. Soranus (quoted by Norden, loc. cit. and Kern, p. 93), *deus unus et omnes*, and Orph. Fragm. no. 239.

[44] Orph. Fragm. no. 168, 1–2, p. 201. Cf. note 49 below.

[45] Orph. Fragm. no. 62, p. 145.

[46] Orph. Fragm. no. 245–248. These three versions were transmitted to the Greek Fathers by Jewish Hellenists who recast an Orphic hymn on the παντοκράτωρ; see Kern's notes, p. 255 f., Lobeck, Aglaophamus 447 f., Rohde, Psyche II 114, n. 3,

"Omnipotent, imperishable, immortal, Thou whose name is known only to the immortals, come, greatest of all gods, with mighty strength, frightful, invincible, great, imperishable, Thou who art wreathed with ether." [47] This conclusion bears the typical marks of a spell (ἐπάναγκος).[48] It is interesting to note that the other variants of this Orphic hymn show no trace of magical influence; they are prayers composed for religious edification, or even as mere literary productions. Consequently we may infer that some later Orphics changed the hymn into an incantation by adding the formula of conjuration just quoted. It looks as if a similar change must have been made in the Orphic hymn which served our author as a model, for he seems to have had before him a prayer already adapted for magical purposes. This hypothesis gains in probability by a consideration of how and why Plato and Orphic hymnody came to be combined in such a hymn as ours.

In the Laws, Plato quotes an "old saying" (ὁ παλαιὸς λόγος) on God "who holds the beginning and end and middle of all things." [49] The line formed the opening of the Orphic Hymn to Zeus already mentioned, and we have seen that it recurs in the Latin hymn ascribed to Plato.[50] The Orphic Hymn to Zeus underwent extensive changes in later times; [51] it was greatly expanded, and in turn material was drawn from it for other Orphic hymns. Thus, the line quoted both by Plato and in the Latin

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Norden, op. cit. 199, n. 2. Διαθῆκαι, 'testaments,' the original title of this group of hymns, has to be understood as the spiritual inheritance which Orpheus left to his successor Musaeus (identified by the Jewish Hellenists as Moses). The other title, παλινῳδία, is a Jewish invention, and finds no support in the text; the alleged contradiction between Orpheus' doctrine of 365 deities and his confession to One God (regarded by Jews and Christians as proof of his repentance) does not in fact exist, since, according to Orphic ideas, the highest god is *unus et omnes* (see note 43 above).

[47] Orph. Fragm. no. 248 b, p. 265: Ἄφθιτον, ἀθάνατον, ῥητὸν μόνον ἀθανάτοισιν, | ἐλθέ, μέγιστε θεῶν πάντων, κρατερῇ σὺν ἀνάγκῃ, | φρικτὸς, ἀήττητος, μέγας, ἄφθιτος, ὃν στέφει αἰθήρ.

[48] The magical character of this conclusion was recognized by Lobeck, Aglaophamus 456.

[49] Plat. Laws 715 E (Orph. Fragm. no. 21, p. 90f.). The passage is quoted by the following Platonists: Albinus 181, 31 f.; Atticus ap. Euseb. Praep. evang. XV 5, 2; Celsus ap. Orig. VI 15; Hippolyt. Ref. I 19, 6. Cf. also ps.-Aristotle, De mundo 401 B 24 f., ps-Archytas ap. Iambl. Protr. IV, p. 23, 3 f. Pistelli.

[50] See note 44 above.

[51] Compare Orph. Fragm. no. 21a with no. 168. See R. Harder, Philologus LXXXV, 243 f., Kern, Religion d. Griech. II 158, n. 1.

hymn occurs in an Orphic hymn on the Ruler of the Universe intentionally named "An Old Saying." [52] Of this hymn three different versions are preserved,[53] of which one is the hymn whose magical invocation [54] has been quoted above. Each of these three Orphic hymns has something in common with the Latin hymn, one the magical character, another the line quoted by the genuine Plato; all are addressed to the Supreme God. It is not improbable, therefore, that the author of the hymn ascribed to Plato was acquainted with yet another variant of this hymn, one no longer extant,[55] in which these three features were combined, and that he regarded this variant as identical with the παλαιὸς λόγος known to Plato.

On such an assumption, the Latin poem is far more understandable. It is no mere literary exercise. The author wished to be taken seriously, and has invented a pseudo-historical argument which may well have led astray untutored readers. He tried to convey the impression that the hymn to which Plato refers casually in the Laws was actually used by the philosopher when he addressed himself to the supreme divinity for personal enlightenment. The magical character of the Latin hymn does not tell against this reconstruction. On the contrary, it is scarcely imaginable that the author would have dared on his own account to impute to Plato the use of magic. If, however, that version of the παλαιὸς λόγος which he erroneously regarded as the one cited by Plato already contained these magical notions, his transformation of the philosopher into a magician appears less startling: since on one occasion Plato cited the Orphic hymn with apparent approval, why might he not on another occasion make use of the magic which the hymn embodied? [56] Thus we may infer that the Latin hymn on the Omnipotent stood very closely de-

[52] Orph. Fragm. no. 247, p. 261, v. 9 (the end of the prologue): παλαιὸς δὲ λόγος περὶ τοῦδε (sc. τοῦ κόσμου ἄνακτος) φαείνει, and v. 35 (the end of the hymn): ἀρχὴν αὐτὸς ἔχων καὶ μέσσην ἠδὲ τελευτήν, ὡς λόγος ἀρχαίων.

[53] See note 46 above.

[54] Magical invocation: no. 248 b, see note 47 above; line quoted by Plato: see note 52 above; the Supreme God: no. 245, 7, no. 247, 8, no. 248 a, 14.

[55] We must bear in mind that Orphic poetry was neither canonized nor preserved by an organized body of devotees, and so was easily changed in both form and content. See A. D. Nock, Harv. Theol. Rev. XXXIII (1940) 302 f.

[56] It goes without saying that neither the author of our hymn nor any other ancient votary of Orphic traditions was interested in deeper inquiries into the original form of the hymn and its modifications. The Neoplatonists believed that

pendent on one of the later adaptations of the celebrated Orphic hymn on Zeus.

We are now in a position to determine approximately the period in which the hymn ascribed to Plato was produced. It is stated in the heading that the poem is a translation from Greek, and there is no reason to question this.[57] The date of the Latin translator furnishes a *terminus ad quem*; as we shall presently see, he flourished in the fourth century of our era. Since the author of the hymn was a Platonist, the history of the doctrines of that school may prove helpful in fixing the date. Thus, the absence of any specific Neoplatonic notion suggests that the poem is not later than the first half of the third century. The description of the Supreme Being as a "fiery radiance" — resulting from a combination of the Stoic doctrine of the immanent noetic fire and the Platonic doctrine of the supramundane noetic light — points to a similar date, since it occurs first in the Oracula Chaldaica, a composition of Platonizing Orientals who lived in Rome at the end of the second century.[58] Again, it would hardly have occurred to anyone to present Plato as a magician before Platonism itself had begun to pay attention to magic, and this is not attested before the second century A.D. It was preceded or accompanied by the interest which certain Platonists of this period, such as Plutarch, Apuleius, and Maximus of Tyre showed in demonology; the validity of magic is fully acknowledged by Numenius, a contemporary of the Chaldaeans.[59] Furthermore, Plato would not have been depicted as striving for otherworldly revelation about

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Plato knew of the *ἱερὸς λόγος* (Rohde, Psyche II 416), and Proclus thought that the later version of the Orphic hymn to Zeus was Plato's model, cf. O. Kern, De Orphei etc. theogoniis (Berlin, 1888) 38.

[57] The Latin translation is, as a whole, a remarkable performance, but it seems that in one instance Tiberianus did not quite master the difficulties. *Fulmineis forsan rapida sub imagine membris* (v. 18) is disordered. *Fulmineis membris* depends on *complecteris* (v. 17) but *rapida sub imagine* lacks syntactical connection. Was he perhaps trying to render Greek *δέμας*, cf. Hom. Il. XI 596, *δέμας πυρὸς ἀιθομένοιο*? As to the simile itself, cf. Plut. De Iside 77, 382 D; *ἡ δὲ τοῦ νοητοῦ . . . νόησις, ὥσπερ ἀστραπὴ διαλάμψασα*, and Plat. Epist. VII 341 C: *οἷον ἀπὸ πυρὸς πηδήσαντος ἐξαφθὲν φῶς*. Cf. also note 26.

[58] W. Kroll, De oraculis Chaldaicis (Breslau, 1894) 68. I shall deal with this problem at length in my "Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy."

[59] On the demonology of Plutarch, Apuleius, and Maximus see R. Heinze, Xenokrates, 99 f. Numenius calls Moses *ἀνδρὶ γενομένῳ θεῷ εὔξασθαι δυνατωτάτῳ* (see E. A. Leemans, Numenius van Apamea, 1937, 137 fr. 18); this presupposes belief in the magical power of prayer.

metaphysical questions save in an age of intellectual distrust and yearning for illumination. It is a reasonable conjecture therefore that the hymn ascribed to Plato was composed about the end of the second century A.D.

There is, finally, the question of the personality of the translator. This is the only subject which has been treated at all thoroughly, and even here major facts have escaped attention. Three small poems by Tiberianus have survived. The first gives a fine description of nature, apparently taken from a longer narrative.[60] The second is a vehement invective against the pernicious influence of gold; [61] it is a rather pedantic composition, but is of interest because it is put in the mouth of Socrates. The third is the hymn on the Omnipotent. These three poems are included in various Latin anthologies composed at the end of antiquity.[62] It seems probable that the anthologists took the two latter poems from a larger work by Tiberianus. This suggestion is supported by what can be gleaned from a study of a prose fragment of Tiberianus found in Fulgentius.[63] The relevant passage runs as follows: "Diogenes the Cynic railed at the inheritance of Plato, and found in it nothing more than a golden tongue, as Tiberianus relates in his work on Socrates." [64] We learn from this that Tiberianus composed a work in prose on Plato's master, in which he had occasion to mention the scorn of the puritanical Cynic for the fine talk of the "high brow" philosopher. Socrates' scorn of refinement also interested the Latin writer, as we see in Tiberianus' poem on gold. It is likely therefore that this poem was taken from Tiberianus' monograph on Socrates, and it is possible that this poem, like that to the Omnipotent, was a translation of a Greek original no longer extant. And since the work on Socrates included comment on Plato it may well be that the translation of the hymn ascribed to Plato belongs to this work

[60] Anth. Lat. I 2, no. 809 Riese. See Lenz, PWK, s.v. Tiberianus, 767 f.

[61] Anth. Lat. I 2, no. 719 b; see Lenz, loc. cit. 770. On no. 810, which has been assigned to Tiberianus, but which is transmitted anonymously, see Lenz 771 f.

[62] No. 809 (see note 60) is preserved only in one MS of the XVth century, which also contains no. 719 b. On the transmission of the hymn to the Omnipotent see above, note 1.

[63] Anth. Lat. I 2, no. 809, fr. 4, p. 298 Riese.

[64] *Platonis hereditatem Diogenes Cynicus invadens nihil ibi plus aurea lingua invenit, ut Tiberianus in libro de Socrate memorat.*

also.[65] If so, we should imagine this monograph as a loose miscellany of facts, anecdotes, and curiosities. The example of Macrobius' Saturnalia shows that such a collection, brought together by a widely read writer, appealed to the taste of the public in later Roman antiquity.

As to the date of Tiberianus, there is common agreement[66] that he is the Tiberianus mentioned in Jerome's Chronicles as *vir disertus* and as *praefectus praetorio* of Gallia in 335, and elsewhere as *comes per Africam* in 326, *comes Hispaniarum* in 332, and *vicarius Hispaniarum* in 336.[67] The fact that Servius, at the end of the century, quotes him as a well-known author lends support to this identification.[68] His choice of literary themes gives further corroboration. As Norden suggested,[69] it is highly probable that Tiberianus was associated with the circle of Roman Platonists flourishing at the beginning of the fourth century. The growth, activity, and influence of this last spiritual movement in Roman paganism have not as yet, unfortunately, been adequately investigated. Here we can only remark that Plotinus succeeded in gaining admission to the Imperial court and the Senatorial coterie, and that Porphyry, his disciple and successor, strengthened these ties and organized his influential adherents for the final struggle with the victorious Church. The reaction of these nobles of Rome to the transcendental doctrines of Neoplatonism varied widely: some merely dabbled in it, others were led to practise the strictest asceticism. Porphyry tells of one of Plotinus' pupils, the senator Rogatianus, who "had proceeded so far in his detachment from this life, that he abandoned all his possessions, dismissed his servants, and abdicated his official post . . . whereupon Plotinus set him up as a good example for all lovers of wisdom."[70] This ascetic mood then prevailing in Platonic circles is clearly reflected in Tiberianus' literary interests, and may ac-

[65] The suggestion that the poem on gold and the hymn to the Omnipotent both come from the work on Socrates was made by Lenz, loc. cit. 773.

[66] See Schanz, cited above, note 1, and Teuffel-Kroll-Skutsch, Gesch. d. röm. Lit. (1913) § 401, n. 8.

[67] Cod. Theodos. 12, 5, 1; Cod. Just. 6, 1, 6; Cod. Theodos. 3, 5, 5.

[68] Servius, Aen. VI 136 fin., 532 (quoted p. 298 Riese).

[69] Norden, Agnostos Theos 78, n. 1, followed by Lenz, 773.

[70] Porphyry, V. Plot. 7. See Zeller, Gesch. d. gr. Philosophie III 2^4 p. 523, n. 5. On Cynical views in Porphyry see R. Reitzenstein, Des Athanasius Werk

count for his sympathy with the rigorous morality of Socrates. Likewise, the main ideas of the hymn on the Omnipotent are in general accord with other tendencies of Neoplatonism. It is easy to imagine that a Neoplatonist brought up in the school of Porphyry would be attracted by a hymn in which henotheistic belief, Orphic mysticism, and magic were joined with the metaphysics of the Timaeus, the most highly esteemed of the writings of Plato.

If Tiberianus belonged to this circle, it is a fair conjecture that Porphyry's Philosophy of the Oracles was the literary source from which he drew the hymn ascribed to Plato. This work, known to us from extensive quotations in the patristic writers, aimed to demonstrate the philosophical — i.e. Platonic — meaning of Greek oracular poetry.[71] Of it Porphyry himself wrote: "The utility of this collection will be appreciated most by those who have experienced the birth-throes of truth (i.e. metaphysical perception), and have prayed for divine revelation, that through the trustworthy teaching of those who speak (i.e. the gods) they might obtain rest from their perplexity." [72] This might almost be an introduction to our hymn, and shows, at least, how well the hymn would fit into the framework of Porphyry's book. The work did contain, in fact, not only oracles, but also hymns, including one or more to the Ruler of the Universe.[73] It was translated into Latin, and Augustine quotes from this translation, as he explicitly states.[74] Porphyry was the most learned of the Neoplatonists, and his works were an abundant source of information to the Western members of the school.[75] Tiberianus, in the generation after Porphyry, would hardly have neglected these writings, and it is very probable that in the Philosophy of the Oracles he found the original of the hymn to the Omnipotent ascribed to Plato.

über das Leben des Antonius, Sitzungsber. Heidelberg, 1914, passim, and his Historia monachorum (Göttingen 1916) 102 f.

[71] G. Wolff, Porphyrii de philosophia ex oraculis haurienda librorum reliquiae, Berlin 1856; J. Bidez, Vie de Porphyre (Gand 1913) 17 f.

[72] The passage is quoted by Euseb. Praep. evang. IV 7, 2. See Wolff, 110.

[73] Wolff, 144 f., has one hymn to the World-ruler; for another see ps.-Justin, Cohort. ad. Graec. c. 38, who points to a pagan source. As the oracle on the Hebrews quoted by him in c. 11 and 24 is taken from Porphyry's Philosophy of the Oracles (see Wolff, 141, n. 7), the hymn may come from the same source.

[74] Augustine, Civ. dei XIX 23 (Wolff, 183 f.).

[75] Cf. the study of Mras, cited above, note 7.

EUHEMERUS AND THE HISTORIANS

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Euhemerus is one of the most elusive and disconcerting writers in the Hellenistic period. He survives chiefly in the pages of Diodorus Siculus, who almost certainly had not taken the measure of his author. Our other chief source of information comes from the translation made by the poet Ennius, which in turn is known only through the works of later writers, who cited him for purposes of their own. Other authors have paid Euhemerus the compliment of imitating him, and something of their work has survived, also in fragments. Philo of Byblus wrote in the same spirit, and recent excavations at Ras Shamra have shown that his Phoenician History must be taken much more seriously than has been the fashion.[1] Under these circumstances it may be worth while to re-examine the Euhemeristic tradition in an attempt to define its characteristics and its influence on the writing of history.

In a sense Euhemerism did not begin with Euhemerus, because the elements of his theory were present before he wrote. Nevertheless, the combination of old ideas was new, and could not have been made before the deeds of Alexander suggested a part of the pattern. The following is a summary of his work, so far as the extant fragments permit.[2]

Euhemerus purports to be the trusted friend of Cassander, for whom he undertook numerous journeys.[3] On one occasion he sailed from Arabia Felix, and after a long voyage southward into the Arabian sea he reached a group of islands; three of them were Hiera, where burial was forbidden, another island nearby which was used as a cemetery, and the large island of Panchaea, from the eastern tip of which the

[1] See Otto Eissfeldt, Ras Schamra und Sanchunjaton, in the Beiträge zur Religionsgeschichte des Altertums, No. 4, Halle, 1939, pp. 1–157, esp. p. 29.

[2] The text followed is that of Felix Jacoby, Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker, vol. 1, Berlin, 1922, pp. 300–313. The fragments are chiefly from Diodorus Siculus and from the fragments of the Sacra Historia, Ennius' translation of Euhemerus' Ἱερὰ ἀναγραφή.

[3] Ibid., T 1 from Diod. Sic. (VI, 1) in Eusebius' Praep. Evang. II, 2, p. 59 D.

Indian coast was barely visible.[4] Spice trees and medicinal herbs are among the natural curiosities of these islands which reach the Mediterranean markets. Tithes are levied on them by the kings.[5] A more detailed account is given of the island of Panchaea with its mixed population of Panchaeans, Oceanites, Indians, Scythians and Cretans. The chief city is Panara, whose inhabitants are called Suppliants of Triphylian Zeus. They alone among the islanders have no king. Instead they enjoy their own laws and elect three annual magistrates, who settle all legal suits not involving the death penalty. Capital offenses are judged by the priests.[6] Sixty stades from Panara stands a temple in honor of Triphylian Zeus, which is much admired for its magnificence, its antiquity and its setting. It lies in a paradise of bubbling springs, tall shade trees, beautiful singing birds and a profusion of fruits. Around the temple and the sacred spring called Water of Helios is an enclosure forbidden to everyone except the priests. The whole temple area is sacred to the gods, and the income derived from it is used to maintain the sacrifices.[7] Beyond this temple district is a high mountain dedicated to the gods and named Seat of Uranus. The inhabitants say that in olden days when Uranus ruled the world he lived on this mountain, from which he observed the heavens and the stars. In later days the mountain came to be called Triphylian Olympus, from the three peoples who formerly lived there — the Panchaeans, the Oceanites and the Doii. The last-named were later expelled by Ammon.[8] The people of Panchaea are divided into the three classes of priests, farmers and soldiers. The artisans are assigned to the priests, while the shepherds are associated with the soldiers. Euhemerus goes on to describe their social system in some detail. Farm production is encouraged by prizes offered for the greatest yield, and enterprising shepherds are similarly rewarded. Private property is limited to house and yard. All else is owned in common and assigned by the priests, each of whom receives double the ordinary share of everything. The priests claim to be of Cretan origin, having been brought to Panchaea by Zeus. In evidence they point out Cretan peculiarities in their speech.[9] The central part of Euhemerus' account appears to have been his elaborate description of the shrine of Triphylian Zeus, containing a golden stele with the deeds of Uranus, Cronus and Zeus engraved upon it in Panchaean [10] writing or else in the Egyptian

[4] Ibid., combining F 2 from Diod. Sic. (VI, 1) in Euseb. Praep. Evang. II, 2 with F 3 from Diod. Sic. V, 41, 4; 42, 4.

[5] Ibid., F 3 from Diod. Sic. V, 41, 5–8; 42, 1.

[6] Ibid., V, 42, 5–6.

[7] Ibid., V, 42, 7 — 44, 5.

[8] Ibid., V, 44, 6.

[9] Ibid., V, 45, 3–5; 46, 3.

[10] Ibid., F 2 from Diod. Sic. (VI, 1) in Euseb. Praep. Evang. II, 2 p. 60 E.

sacred script.[11] The exploits of Artemis and Apollo had also been engraved on the stele at a later date by Hermes.[12] This inscription relates that Uranus was the first king, a benefactor to man and versed in the movements of the stars. He was the first to honor the heavenly gods with sacrifices, and thus obtained his name of Uranus.[13] His wife Hestia bore him two sons and two daughters, Titan, Cronus, Rhea and Demeter. Cronus followed his father, and married his sister Rhea, by whom he had Zeus, Hera and Poseidon. Zeus succeeded to the throne and fathered the Curetes, Persephone and Athena. Zeus was a great conqueror, visiting almost all lands and being universally acknowledged as a god. It was Zeus who returned to Panchaea and set up an altar to Uranus.[14] Other scattered fragments about Zeus tell us that he fought a long war against the Titans; that he was the first to establish law and order for man; that he abolished cannibalism; that he acted as a judge; that he gave audience to anyone who had found out something beneficial to man; that he ordered his own worship everywhere; and that he was finally buried at Cnossus in Crete.[15] Less flattering statements are made about Aphrodite — that she instituted the profession of courtesan, and about Cadmus — that he once cooked for the ruler of Sidon and then eloped with the flute girl, Harmonia.[16]

Perhaps a clearer idea of Euhemerus' own position and influence on later writers may be gained by separating out the

[11] Ibid., F 3 from Diod. Sic. V, 46, 5–8. It may be that Euhemerus mentioned two stelae, one in the shrine on Triphylian Olympus, the other in the valley temple, one written in Panchaean and the other in Egyptian characters.

[12] That Hermes should have written in Egyptian would have seemed appropriate to the Hellenistic Greeks, who identified Hermes with the Egyptian scribe god, Thoth.

[13] Carl Langer argues plausibly to show that Euhemerus did not describe the *οὐράνιοι θεοί* as independent of and antecedent to the *θεοὶ εὐεργέται*, but rather that this distinction is the work of Diodorus. See "Euhemeros und die Theorie der *φύσει* und *θέσει θεοί*," in ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ, vol. 2, Leipzig, 1926, pp. 53–59. Whether Langer is correct or not it is evident that Euhemerus' real interest was in the *θεοὶ εὐεργέται*. W. W. Tarn believes that Euhemerus, "did nevertheless have real gods in his Utopia. . . ." See his "Alexander and the Unity of Mankind," in the Proceedings of the British Academy, vol. 19, London, 1933, p. 24 following the pagination of the reprint.

[14] Jacoby, F. Gr. H., vol. 1, F 2, 9, from Diod. Sic. (VI, 1) in Euseb. Praep. Evang. II, 2, p. 60 D.

[15] Ibid., For the Titans, see F 16 from Lactantius' Div. inst. I, 14, 10–12; for the abolition of cannibalism, see F 22 from Div. inst. I, 13, 2; for Zeus the lawgiver and civilizer, see F 20, ibid., I, 11, 35; for his ordering his own worship, see F 23, ibid., I, 22, 21–27; for his death in Crete, see F 24, ibid., I, 11, 46.

[16] For Aphrodite (Venus), see F 25, ibid., I, 17, 10; for Cadmus and Harmonia, see F 1 from Athenaeus XIV, 658 EF.

elements in his work that stem from the period before Alexander. The notion of a people far away, either in time or place, who lived a happy life in ideal surroundings was well established in Greek tradition, and the possibilities had already been explored by poets, historians and philosophers. We have only to remember the Ethiopians of Homer,[17] and the happy lot of man before Pandora in Hesiod,[18] and the idealized Hyperboreans of Herodotus,[19] and the tale of the lost Atlantis in Plato,[20] and the descriptions of idealized peoples in Theopompus,[21] to mention only a few familiar examples. The purpose of these idealized descriptions varied with the character of the writer, and might range from pure entertainment to a biting attack on contemporary society. Both elements are usually present. Naturally the plausibility of any particular account is an index to the skill of the author, as the effects of Plato's Critias on undisciplined imaginations abundantly testify. It would obviously be as absurd to accuse Plato of deceiving his readers as to make a similar charge against Cervantes. *Caveat lector!*

Likewise there was ample precedent for the association of philanthropy in the broad Greek sense, with divine honors. Heracles is merely the most conspicuous example among many, while historic personages like Lysander and Plato had also been honored by a shrine and sacrifices.[22] It is well to note, however,

[17] Odyssey I, 22ff.

[18] Hesiod, Works and Days, 90ff.

[19] Herodotus, Hist. IV, 32ff.

[20] In the Critias.

[21] See Jacoby, F. Gr. H., vol. 2 B, pp. 551–552, Theopompus F 75c from Aelian's Var. Hist. III, 18. The fragment is from a digression in the eighth book of the Philippica so extensive as to be cited separately as the *θαυμάσια*. In addition to the Machimoi and the Eusebeis, whose conduct is contrasted in this fragment, he must have described an idealized people whom he calls the Meropes.

[22] For *φιλανθρωπία* and similar Greek ideals of the period, see M. Rostovtzeff, The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World, Oxford, 1941, vol. 3, p. 1358, n. 4; for the profession of these ideals by Hellenistic rulers, ibid., n. 5. For deification of Greek heroes, see W. S. Ferguson in the Camb. Anc. Hist., vol. 7, p. 13, and in the bibliography to chapter 1; see also Eduard Meyer, Kleine Schriften, 2nd ed., vol. 1, Halle, 1924, p. 287.

M. P. Charlesworth ("Some observations on ruler-cult, especially in Rome," The Harvard Theological Review, vol. 28, 1, 1935, pp. 5–44) cites a number of very useful passages, including one from the Odyssey where Odysseus promises divine honors to Nausicaä if she enables him to reach Ithaca (Od. VIII, 464ff.; Charlesworth p. 8). This is particularly interesting because of its early date, and also because of the promise of divine honors to a living person. Charlesworth also

that deification was still a spontaneous act, either a recognition of services rendered or a lively anticipation of favors to come. It was scarcely a political device employed in the interests of absolutism until after Alexander.[23]

The tendency to rationalize stories of gods and heroes was also a venerable one, and involved two opposite points of view. Some writers tried to historicize the myths by explaining away the miraculous details as poetic exaggeration or allegory, leaving in their place a prosaic narrative of events as they might actually have occurred. Herodotus, for example, rationalizes the stories about Io and about the Trojan war.[24] Other writers start at the opposite pole with two assumptions, that the gods exist and that they are ideal beings. From this point of view they reject as false, statements made about the gods in Homer or elsewhere that represent them as deceitful, boastful, amorous or subject to any human frailty.[25] Both groups accept the myths of gods and heroes as source material which has an ascertainable relationship to the truth. Atheism in the modern sense was probably unknown, simply because the Greeks, unlike the Hebrews, had no conception of, "God with a capital G."[26] Furthermore, Euhemerus, himself, is careful to distinguish between the *heavenly* gods and the Olympian deities — unless Diodorus has misrepresented him. In no extant fragment does he cast doubt on the existence of the former.

Ideal commonwealths like that of the Panchaeans had already been described, not only by Plato and Theopompus, but doubtless by many other writers before Alexander's time. Literary utopias were sufficiently common in Aristophanes' day to furnish

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points out the essential similarity between the honors paid to gods and to heroes (pp. 9–10). Perhaps the distinction is comparable to that between "beatus" and "saint."

[23] See M. P. Charlesworth, op. cit., p. 14.

[24] For Io see Herodotus, Hist. I, 1ff; for the Trojan war, ibid., II, 118ff.

[25] Xenophanes rebukes Homer and Hesiod for ascribing human weaknesses to the gods. See Hermann Diels, Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker, 5th ed., Berlin, 1934, fragments of Xenophanes, esp. F 11, p. 132 from Sextus, adv. math. IX, 193. Plato's good humored censorship of Homer is known to every reader of the Republic. Cf. Eduard Meyer, Geschichte des Altertums, vol. 3, 2nd ed., Stuttgart, 1937, p. 206f.

[26] I.e. the Greek gods were not creators but merely rulers. Aristophanes' attack on Socrates in the Clouds is not directed against atheism but rather against innovation. The quotation is from M. P. Charlesworth, op. cit. p. 6.

him with material for the Ecclesiazusae. Robert von Pöhlmann may have been right in connecting the tripartite division of the Panchaeans with Hippodamus of Miletus, but his account of Euhemerus as a whole is marred by references to modern socialism which do not apply.[27] There is certainly no reason to suspect Euhemerus of making use of accounts of the caste system in India or the class system in Egypt.[28]

Because all of these tendencies were present in Greek literature before Alexander, the question naturally arises, "What remains that may fairly be called Euhemeristic?" The answer appears to lie in Euhemerus' new arrangement of well known elements, in the employment of new illustrative material and in the subordination of everything to a new end. That is to say that Euhemerus belonged to a generation with problems of its own and a distinctive outlook. Prominent in the foreground was the fact of Alexander's career. Its effects were as great in the intellectual as in the political realm. While his memory was still warm no imaginative writer could well resist the wealth of information and misinformation gathered by Alexander's subordinates and disseminated in popular accounts. The world of Plato must have seemed incredibly small when first hand accounts began to pour in from Egypt and the East, partly written records and partly stories told by Alexander's veterans. As Karl Trüdinger says, there had been no such inpouring of new facts about strange places and peoples and customs since the old Ionian days, and the beginnings of Greek historical inquiry.[29] It was an age of strong personalities and bewildering changes in which few could afford to look ahead with confidence. The Greek found it necessary to adjust himself intellectually to the new forces at large in the world. There were staunch conservatives like Theopompus who continued to look backwards,[30] and there were men of

[27] Robert von Pöhlmann, Geschichte der sozialen Frage und des Sozialismus in der antiken Welt, 2 vols., 2nd ed., Munich, 1912, vol. 2, pp. 372–387. See pp. 380–382.

[28] See F. Jacoby, "Euemeros," No. 3 in Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, vol. 6, coll. 962–963.

[29] Karl Trüdinger, Studien zur Geschichte der griechisch-römischen Ethnographie, Basel, 1918, p. 64.

[30] Ibid., p. 59ff. See also Kurt von Fritz, "The Historian Theopompus," The American Historical Review, vol. 44, No. 4, 1941, pp. 765–787, esp. pp. 778, 783.

greater depth who insisted on a new moral foundation for life, like the Stoics and Cynics, but there remained a large body of persons who wanted a plausible rather than a difficult explanation of Alexander and the Diadochi, and a new *modus vivendi.* To these men Euhemerus must have made an immediate appeal.

Euhemerus was not the first writer to edit the stories about the gods by introducing details obviously borrowed from Alexander's conquest. At least three writers preceded him in this, Hecataeus of Abdera, Leon of Pella and Megasthenes. Megasthenes describes Dionysus' progress through India, and depicts him as a city founder and a civilizer in definitely Hellenistic terms,[31] Leon of Pella had a similar viewpoint, and his influence may well have been considerable, but the extant fragments of his work do not enable us to do him justice.[32] Hecataeus was used by Euhemerus,[33] and we have considerable portions of his Aegyptiaca embedded in the pages of Diodorus Siculus. The extent to which Euhemerus was anticipated by Hecataeus will probably never be known. For our purposes it is more important to notice the way in which the same tendencies appear in different writers during the generation following Alexander. For this shows that Euhemerus' work was characteristic of the period.[34] What could be more comforting or more plausible to a generation suffering from the violence of self-made kings than to transfer the whole disquieting social situation back into the more respectable world of myth? The dazzling achievements of Alexander took on a reassuring familiarity when Zeus ceased to be a Homeric king and became a Hellenistic despot.

[31] For Megasthenes' fragments, see Karl Müller, Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum, vol. 2, Paris, 1878, pp. 402–439. See esp. F 20, 21 and 22. See also the account of Semiramis' invasion of India given by Diodorus Siculus, who was undoubtedly following Megasthenes — esp. II, 16–19.

[32] See Julius Kaerst, Geschichte des Hellenistischen Zeitalters, 1st ed., vol. 2, 1, Leipzig and Berlin, 1909, p. 223.

[33] See Jacoby, "Euemeros," No. 3, Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, vol. 6, coll. 958, 969. For an argument against Jacoby's dating of Euhemerus in ca. 280 as too late, see W. W. Tarn, "Alex. and the Unity of Man.," Appendix.

[34] See Paul Wendland, Die Hellenistisch-Römische Kultur in ihren Beziehungen zu Judentum und Christentum, 2nd ed., Tübingen, 1912, pp. 120ff. Jacoby ("Euemeros," No. 3, Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, vol. 6, col. 970) points out that Euhemerus himself, appears to have introduced the idea of *self-deification.* The imperfect state of our knowledge about Leon and Hecataeus makes it impossible for us to be sure. In any event this was a detail obviously borrowed from the career of Alexander.

The choleric wielder of the thunderbolt turns into a civilized being who acts in accordance with reason, and who justifies his exalted position by the benefits he confers upon mankind. Here Euhemerus seems to have made a wider appeal than Hecataeus, for Hecataeus purports to deal only with the gods of Egypt, while Euhemerus explains the Olympian gods themselves. Also, Hecataeus seems to have stressed the great antiquity, hence superiority, of Egyptian customs, while his explanation of the origin of the gods is subordinated to that end.

The first temptation for anyone reading the fragments of Euhemerus or Hecataeus to-day, is to assume that they were written satirically. Even investigators of the stature of Franz Susemihl and Felix Jacoby have contributed to the notion that Euhemerus was trying to deceive his readers, or that he was a scoffer.[35] Ulrich Wilcken, however, has performed a useful service in insisting on the genuine religious feeling associated with the worship of Alexander,[36] a feeling that would find support rather than ridicule in Euhemerus' views. While it is probably true that Euhemerism somewhat lowered the conception of the Olympian gods, it is equally clear that humanity was correspondingly elevated by the deification of benefactors of the human race, and that an incentive was held out to future rulers to earn deification by worthy deeds. Perhaps ancient attacks on Euhemerus can partly be explained by the fact that his views were not made official; on the whole the Hellenistic rulers preferred to base their own deification on descent from the Olympian gods.[37]

Before leaving Euhemerus to discuss his influence on later writers, it may be worth while to call attention to his use of documentary evidence, for this comes to be an essential part of the tradition. Here as elsewhere Alexander had pointed the way. The Macedonian chancellery grew and became more spe-

[35] See Jacoby, op. cit., coll. 958, 961; F Susemihl, Geschichte der griechischen Litteratur in der Alexandrinerzeit, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1891, vol. 1, p. 319, n. 46. See also Kaerst. Gesch. d. Hell. Zeit., vol. 2, 1, p. 226.

[36] U. Wilcken, "Zur Entstehung des hellenistischen Königskultes," Sitzb. Preuss. Akad., vol. 30, 1938, pp. 298–321, esp. p. 304.

[37] See Christ-Schmid, Geschichte der Griechischen Litteratur, 6th ed., part 2, 1st half, Munich, 1920, p. 232, n. 4.

cialized as Alexander advanced. Official reports on all matters had to be made in writing, whether their purpose was military or scientific,[38] and the practise arose of keeping a documentary record of day by day occurrences. The growing interest in source material is abundantly illustrated in the period following Alexander by the individual compilations of men like Craterus, Polemon, Diodorus and Heliodorus,[39] and also by the growth of libraries ranging in size from private collections all the way up to the state-supported library at Alexandria. The written record also played a more important part in everyday life.[40] During Alexander's march continual use had to be made of interpreters, and the language difficulties became a problem that even interested popular writers. Onesicritus mentions the interpreters in his vivid account of the naked philosophers in India, and both he and Aristobulus were interested in the writing as well as the meaning of Persian inscriptions.[41] Therefore it is altogether fitting that Euhemerus described both the monuments and the writing of the assumed sources of his information.

In the second century B.C. there was an Alexandrian grammarian known as Dionysius *Scytobrachion* or *Leather Arm* who

[38] See Helmut Berve, Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage, 2 vols., Munich, 1926, vol. 1, pp. 46–49. See also Hugo Bretzl, Botanische Forschungen des Alexanderzuges, Leipzig, 1903, pp. 198–199. Here we may surely recognize the abiding influence of Aristotle on Alexander.

[39] Craterus: a third century Macedonian, perhaps a member of the royal family, who wrote *ψηφισμάτων Συναγωγή*. See Jacoby and Schoch, "Krateros," No. 1, Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, vol. 11, coll. 1617ff; Christ-Schmid, op. cit., p. 229f.

Polemon: a late third century polymath and periegete from Ilium. Wrote on many subjects including the antiquities of Athens, Eleusis, Sicyon and Delphi. His nickname, *στηλοκόπος*, shows an interest in inscriptions. See Christ-Schmid, op. cit., p. 243f; Karl Müller, Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum, vol. 3, Paris, no date, pp. 108ff.

Diodorus: another third century writer, of unknown origin, who wrote on Athenian antiquities. See E. Schwartz, "Diodoros," No. 37, Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, vol. 5, coll. 662ff.

Heliodorus: an Athenian periegete of unknown date who certainly wrote *Περὶ Ἀκροπόλεως*. The extent and exact nature of his writings are sharply disputed. See esp. B. Keil, "Der Perieget Heliodoros von Athen," Hermes, 1895, pp. 199–240; Christ-Schmid, op. cit., p. 229, n. 3; F. Jacoby, "Heliodoros," No. 11, Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, vol. 8, coll. 15–18.

[40] E.g. letters form a vital part of the plot in many Greek romances. See Elizabeth H. Haight, Essays on the Greek Romances, New York, 1943, esp. pp. 27, 59, 68, 85, 102.

[41] For Onesicritus, see Jacoby, F. Gr. H., vol. 2 B, F 17a, 34; for Aristobulus, ibid., F 51a. On interpreters cf. Herod. Hist. IV, 24.

may have been born in Mitylene.[42] The question whether he wrote several entirely separate works or whether he composed a whole cycle of mythological romances need not detain us here. The fragments, largely preserved in Diodorus Siculus, show that he wrote about the Argonauts, the Amazons, the Atlantans and about the Libyan-born Dionysus.[43] His writing is a patchwork in which some details may be traced back to Herodotus and beyond, while others clearly derive from the Alexander historians. His explanation of the origin of the gods is definitely Euhemeristic. Unlike Euhemerus his sole purpose appears to have been to entertain, and in pursuing this end he combined details from entirely separate myths into a brightly colored whole, with indiscriminate lavishness.[44] He was not bothered by discrepancies, but rationalized the material that lay immediately before him, without regard for what he had already said. Scytobrachion's relationship with the Euhemeristic tradition may be considered under the following heads: plausibility, idealized descriptions, details suggested by Alexander and the Diadochi, and his conception of the gods.

So far as we can judge by what remains, Scytobrachion was not nearly as successful in creating the illusion of truth as Euhemerus had been, but he followed much the same pattern. In support of his narrative about Dionysus, Scytobrachion tells us that Linus recorded his deeds and other mythological matters in his Hypomnemata, which were written in Pelasgian letters. In the time of Orpheus, Thymoetas, a great traveller, crossed Libya all the way to Ocean. He interviewed the Nysaeans, who had preserved legends of Dionysus' upbringing in Nysa; then he wrote the Phrygian Poem, consulting the ancient sources.[45] Jacoby also thinks it likely that Scytobrachion invented a Dionysius of Miletus as a source from whom he pretended to obtain information.[46] Like Euhemerus, Scytobrachion explains supernatural

[42] See E. Schwartz, "Dionysios," No. 109, Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, vol. 5, coll. 929–930; Jacoby, F. Gr. H., vol. 1, p. 510.

[43] See Jacoby, F. Gr. H., vol. 1, pp. 229–257.

[44] Ibid., pp. 509–510.

[45] Ibid., p. 240, Dionys. F 8 from Diod. Sic. III, 67, 5.

[46] Ibid., p. 510, lines 14ff. However, the work of Xanthus the Lydian, another source cited by Scytobrachion, was once regarded as fictitious but is now thought to be both genuine and reputable. See Eduard Meyer, Gesch. d. Alt., vol. 3, 2nd ed., 1937, p. 129f.; Jacoby, F. Gr. H., vol. 1, p. 510, lines 28ff.

details in the interest of plausibility, and he is much given to etymologizing.[47]

He has a number of idealized descriptions, including a rather long account of Hespera, the island of the Amazons, and another of Nysa.[48] Hespera, like the islands of Euhemerus, lies at the edge of the world, this time far to the west. As Schwartz suggested, he may have been influenced by contemporary speculation and attempts to circumnavigate Africa,[49] but he is probably returning to the older literature about the west.[50] In describing Nysa Scytobrachion follows the usual utopian tradition of attributing health and long life to the inhabitants, but he resembles Euhemerus in not making that life miraculously long.[51]

Scytobrachion's fragments include many details suggested by Hellenistic history. We notice that the Amazon queen behaves very much like Alexander, and we also find in the description of the way of life among the Amazons a paradoxical inversion of the normal social relations that would have delighted Herodotus.[52] The reversal of the rôle of the sexes has special point in the Hellenistic period, when one thinks of women like Olympias or Arsinoe. It is curious to see the Amazons founding cities and naming them after their chief officers, and also to find their conquered territory referred to as "spear won land," in good Ptolemic fashion.[53] Women are prominent also in the account of Dionysus, and in the decisive battle Athena supports Dionysus with a female army.[54] Dionysus, like Alexander and the Successors, has a special group of devoted followers — the 200 *σύντροφοι*.[55] More specific reference to Alexander is implied

[47] A rather distressing example is his derivation of the name, "Zeus," from the fact that Zeus helped people to "live" well (i.e. Ζῆνα from καλῶς ζῆν). See Jacoby, F. Gr. H., vol. 1, pp. 239–240, F 7 from Diod. Sic. III, 61, 6.

[48] For Hespera, ibid., p. 232 from Diod. Sic. III, 53, 4–6; for Nysa, ibid., p. 240, F 8 from Diod. Sic. III, 68, 5.

[49] Schwartz, "Dionysios," No. 109, Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll, vol. 5, col. 931.

[50] It is characteristic of Scytobrachion that he is not content with settling one mythical people on his island, but that he also makes room for the equally famous Ichthyophagi. See Jacoby, F. Gr. H., vol. 1, p. 232, Dionys. F 7 from Diod. Sic. III, 53, 6.

[51] Ibid., p. 241, F 8 from Diod. Sic. III, 68, 6.

[52] Cf. Herodotus' account of the way the Egyptians behaved in an opposite manner from other people, Hist. II, 35–36.

[53] See Jacoby, F. Gr. H., vol. 1, p. 234, Dionys. F 7 from Diod. Sic. III, 55, 6.

[54] Ibid., p. 243, F 8 from Diod. Sic. III, 71, 4.

[55] Ibid., from Diod. Sic. III, 71, 3.

when Dionysus establishes an oracle for his father Ammon because the latter had accurately predicted his conquests,[56] and when the enemy captives are given their choice of returning home or enlisting in the army of Dionysus.[57]

Scytobrachion's accounts of the origin of the gods are not consistent, but their Euhemeristic basis is clear. His gods have been deified because of their services in civilizing and otherwise benefitting man.[58] As with Euhemerus, early deification is associated with knowledge of the stars.[59] A good deal is made of the wickedness of Cronus. He has two conventionally bad qualities of impiety (ἀσέβεια) and greed (πλεονεξία). For a time he governs the western world, and his methods may have reminded readers of actual rulers like Cassander. He holds down his unwilling subjects by building strong forts on high places.[60] Zeus is a father to his people, and rules the whole world, doing good to man. He fulfills the qualifications of a good ruler outlined by the Indian sage in speaking to Onesicritus, i.e. he punishes evil doers and benefits the people.[61] These traits are also found in Dionysus, whose invading army is well-disciplined and friendly to the natives.[62] Alexander, too, was remembered as a strict disciplinarian who had forbidden indiscriminate pillaging. It is worth noting that Dionysus is first acknowledged as a god by the captives whom he unexpectedly forgave.[63] Wilcken has shown that Alexander's deification was intended for the Greeks, not for his own people the Macedonians, and also that his acceptance as

[56] Ibid., p. 244 from Diod. Sic. III, 73, 1. The rehandling of the Dionysus stories is an excellent example of the impact of Alexander's career on literature. It has been convincingly shown that the close connection between Alexander and Dionysus was invented after Alexander's death under Ptolemaic auspices, and that Dionysus' exploits as a conqueror came as a result of his association with Alexander. See A. D. Nock, "Notes on ruler-cult I–IV," The Journal of Hellenic Studies, vol. 48, 1928, esp. pp. 21–30.

[57] Jacoby, F. Gr. H., vol. 1, p. 243 from Diod. Sic. III, 71, 5.

[58] E.g. Dionysus was worshipped by captives for his clemency (ibid.); and Titaea was deified after death because she had been the cause of, "many good things for the people" (ibid., p. 236, F 7 from Diod. Sic. III, 57, 2). Her portrait may derive from accounts of Phila or Cratesipolis.

[59] Ibid., p. 236 from Diod. Sic. III, 60, 2.

[60] Ibid., p. 238 from Diod. Sic. III, 61, 3.

[61] See ibid., vol. 2 B, p. 728, line 37–p. 729, line 1, Onesic. F 17a from Strabo XV, 1, 64, where Mandanis briefly sums up the duties of a king.

[62] Ibid., vol. 1, p. 244, Dionys. F 8 from Diod. Sic. III, 72, 4.

[63] Ibid., p. 243 from Diod. Sic. III, 71, 5.

a god was often spontaneous.[64] One passage in Scytobrachion illustrates a religious tendency that had been growing since the days of Euhemerus. We find a rather elaborate account of Basileia, who possessed all the virtues and who was so solicitous of her brothers' welfare that she was like a mother to them. In return she won the name of Great Mother, and with the approval of the people she inherited her father's kingdom as a virgin queen. To provide successors for the throne she married her brother Hyperion, to whom she bore two beautiful children, Helios and Selene. The other brothers jealously murdered Hyperion and also young Helios. His sister Selene was so "fond of her brother" (φιλάδελφος) that she killed herself. Later, Helios appeared to his mother in a dream and explained that he and his sister had been made immortal and that vengeance would overtake her enemies. As a result, divine honors were given the brother-sister pair. In this passage we have clear reference to the cult of Philadelphus and his sister wife Arsinoe, and a historical justification of their worship.[65] The Euhemeristic view had narrowed somewhat. Not only did benefactors become rulers and win immortal honors, but the implication was that rulers *as such* were entitled to worship. The use of a dream is also inconsistent with the purely rational explanations in Euhemerus; an element of mysticism has been added.[66] Euhemerism was becoming stereotyped, and much of the genuine religious appeal of the original has been lost.

Philo of Byblus takes us into a much later period. We are told by Suidas that he was born in the reign of Nero, that he lived a long time, and that he was contemporary with the emperor Hadrian; [67] so we may safely place Philo in the first part of the second century A.D. Among other works Philo wrote a Phoenician History in eight or nine books,[68] the first part of which

[64] Wilcken, "Zur Ensteh. d. König.," Sitzb. Preuss. Akad., 1938, p. 305.

[65] See Jacoby, F. Gr. H., vol. 1, pp. 236–237, Dionys. F 7 from Diod. Sic. III, 57, 3–6. The Egyptian brother-sister marriage of Isis and Osiris was a happy coincidence, but it is to be doubted whether the cult of the θεοὶ ἀδελφοί was ever viewed from the standpoint of the Egyptian. See Rostovtzeff, Soc. and Econ. Hist. of Hell. World, vol. 1, p. 268.

[66] The resemblance between the family life of the Great Mother and what we learn about that of the Ptolemies may be kept in mind.

[67] See Müller, F. H. G., vol. 3, p. 560.

[68] Ibid., Porphyry says he wrote the Phoenician History in eight books, while Eusebius mentions nine.

dealt with the origin of the gods. The whole purports to be a Greek translation of a work written in Phoenician by Sanchuniathon of Berytus, who lived before the Trojan war.[69] Not content with mentioning his authority, Philo describes the methods and also the sources of Sanchuniathon. He tells us the historian wrote an account of the Jews based on Hierombalus, priest of Yahweh (Ieuo), who had dedicated his own commentaries to Abelbalus, King of Berytus.[70] Sanchuniathon is also supposed to have used the Book of Thoth (Taautus), and to have gathered together materials preserved in the shrines in the obscure "Ammonian" writing.[71] After diligent researches Sanchuniathon was able to expose the contradictions and the allegories in the works of the priests, and to reconstruct the true account of the early days.[72] Philo says that subsequently the facts were once more obscured both by Greek writers and by priestly interpretation, and he proposes to restore the true account.[73] Unfortunately, our own knowledge of Philo and hence of Sanchuniathon rests chiefly on fragments preserved in Eusebius' Praeparatio Evangelica. As a Christian apologist the fourth century bishop of Caesarea was very much interested in Philo because Philo explained the gods as deified men, and also because a pagan controversialist, Porphyry, regarded Philo as trustworthy.[74] It was Eusebius' object to refute the pagans, not to recover the history of Phoenicia. His quotations from Philo, therefore, do not give us an accurate picture of the work, but are confined to more sensational statements. Modern writers, unconsciously influenced by Eusebius, have been inclined to regard Philo's work as an elaborate hoax, and have treated Philo in the same spirit as they have treated Dionysius Scytobrachion.[75]

[69] Ibid., p. 563, Philo F 1, 2 from Euseb. Praep. Evang. I, 9, 31 A.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid., p. 564, F 1, 5.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid., F 1, 6.

[74] Eusebius emphasizes the trustworthiness attributed to Sanchuniathon, ibid., F 1, 1.

[75] For this view, see ibid., p. 561, where Müller alludes to Philo's alleged use of Sanchuniathon and says that no one now denies that this is a falsehood, etc. It is well to remember also that Xanthus the Lydian, Scytobrachion's alleged source, is now regarded as genuine. See above n. 46. For a general warning against accepting the charge of "forgery" against later ancient writers, see Eduard Meyer, Gesch. d. Alt., vol. 3, 2nd ed., 1937, p. 209, n. 1.

The results of the excavations at Ras Shamra force us to reconsider this judgment. Among the new materials for study is a considerable body of religious texts going back to about 1500 B.C., before there could have been any Greek influence, and giving us many stories about Phoenician gods, such as the epic of Alijan and Mot.[76] There are numerous instances where divine names appearing in Philo of Byblus recur in the Ras Shamra texts, giving the lie to the notion that Philo invented them,[77] while the peculiarities of the twenty-eight letter Ras Shamra alphabet even suggest an origin for the mysterious "Ammonian" letters mentioned by Philo.[78] The possibilities opened up by these documents for evidence of Oriental influences on the early Greeks are so arresting, that it must be tempting to an Orientalist to overstate his case. Eissfeldt shows good judgment and rare moderation when he refuses to attribute Philo's Euhemeristic ideas to Sanchuniathon,[79] but in return no classicist should refuse to admit that Philo was using authentic Phoenician sources. These discoveries also suggest the use of the fragments of Philo to reconstruct the original account of Sanchuniathon, and to explain parts of the Ras Shamra texts. But from the point of view of Euhemerism the important result is the exoneration of Philo, who must now be regarded as a reputable historian. Why should such a person, living in the time of Hadrian, attribute Euhemeristic ideas to the Phoenicians? The most obvious explanation may well be the correct one, that Philo himself believed that the anthropomorphic gods were men, deified for their benefactions, or because of the terror that they inspired.[80] He may even have sought and found confirmation of his views in the Phoenician accounts about the gods. His patriotic insistence on the antiquity of the Phoenician cities would have led him to attribute his point of view to a Phoenician rather than to a Greek. The distinction

[76] See Otto Eissfeldt, Ras Schamra und Sanchunjaton, Halle 1939, esp. pp. 22, 25, 26, 78–79. See also Vivian and Isaac R. Jacobs, "The Myth of Mot and 'Al'eyan Ba'al," Harv. Theol. Rev., vol. 38, 2, 1945, pp. 77–109.

[77] See ibid., pp. 28, 69, 85 and esp. p. 86.

[78] See ibid., pp. 10–12; 30.

[79] See ibid., esp. p. 30 but also pp. 26–27.

[80] The necessity of placating vengeful gods is responsible for human sacrifice according to Philo. See Müller, F. H. G., vol. 3, p. 570, F 4 from Euseb. Praep. Evang. IV, 16, 156 D.

Philo makes between the natural forces and the gods, however, reminds one of that made between the οὐράνιοι θεοί and the θεοὶ ἐνεργέται. While this distinction may not go back to Euhemerus,[81] it is a part of a tradition preserved in Diodorus which came to be accepted as "Euhemeristic," and it is difficult to imagine that Philo was not conscious of the source of his inspiration.[82] Philo's work is evidence that Euhemerism continued as a force well down into the Roman empire, without losing its identity, like so many other Hellenistic ideas, in the all-embracing Stoa.

[81] See above n. 13.

[82] See Müller, F. H. G., vol. 3, pp. 565–566, F 2 from Euseb. Praep. Evang. I, 10, where he gives his account of the creation. Eissfeldt believes that in the interests of his Euhemeristic thesis he deliberately leaves out Phoenician gods he must have found in Sanchuniathon. See Ras Schamra u. Sanch., p. 137.